

A report on –

**“assessment of SC, ST residential schools functioning in Bihar”**

**Part - 1**

Study conducted by

Sunai-**PROACT**NextStep-Nalanda Consortia

Year – 2009-10

Study assisted by

**UNICEF, Bihar**

## Acknowledgement

SC, ST children are undoubtedly special. Their resolve to fight all odds and circumstances to rise above the shackles of their conditions and what their caste by birth has to offer is a journey any Government would be proud to assist. Support towards the welfare of these children, particularly their education through SC ST residential schools is an opportunity to serve more than a marginalized community; it is a window to nurturing every individual child towards realizing their true potential. To improve the quality of this experience and enrich it further required an assessment of the current status, one that has sadly not changed much since 2001; in previous studies conducted by UNICEF Bihar the observations were as alarming and specific, however the trend having continued has taken a more vicious form in marginalization being more pronounced than ever before in the schools.

The consortia of Sunai, PROACT and Nalanda endeavoured to combine their respective skill set and experiences to add more depth to the study and its recommendations. Through the efforts of UNICEF investigators who conducted intensive interviews, focussed group discussions, learning attainment tests and school profiling a rich pool of data was collected. Perhaps, for the first time responses from parents of enrolled and dropped out children, from children who were enrolled and those that had dropped out as well as interviews of teachers who's were captured. With Sunai's contributions to data processing and management at the ground-level, Nalanda's expert preparation and assessment of multi-level learning attainment tests, observations on classroom transactions and PROACT's contribution to the issues of marginalization and special needs of SC ST children the report has emerged as a composite resource on *reaffirming commitments and seeking concrete steps*.

The consortia thanks the Bihar Government, UNICEF and its team for a learning experience which has given new insights into exclusive education. Most of all, the consortia thanks the parents, guardians, children and teachers for the time and sensitive responses they shared with the team, welcoming each of us with hope and a silent, painful wisdom only the marginalized poor carry.

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## Background

1. UNICEF instituted an assessment of the residential schools exclusively meant for the SC and ST children being implemented by the SC, ST welfare department of Government of Bihar (GoB). The residential school programme is running for over 50 years and UNICEF has assisted GoB in past a decade assess various dimensions of the programme including school performances. The previous reports were studied carefully, found extremely relevant and the current assessment could make much of a departure.
2. Scale of the GoB programme under reference, in light of its adequacy to cover the misery of concerned communities in Bihar is undoubtedly very sketchy and meager. However, the programme holds crucial significance because, with improvements carried out, this may emerge as a model demonstration for the State Government to scale up and strive for a major affirmative socio-politico action.
3. A contract with Sunai Consultants Private Limited was administered, proposal for which was submitted through a consortia of 3 organizations having distinct expertise. PROACT with an edge over the issues around social exclusion, marginalization and educational entitlement, Nalanda on quality of education and Sunai carrying cutting edge specialty on data management. The Sunai-PROACT-Nalanda consortia worked to its best potential, within the extent of opportunity rendered as part of the assessment.
4. Three reports were submitted before the present final report, commencing with (a) an interim report containing methodological tools and relevant rationale, soon after the assessment took off; (b) an interim report on completion of the field visits and (c) a comprehensive ToR-wise findings. The UNICEF extended its inputs, explanations to the final draft report, which have been carefully considered. The corrections and gaps have been addressed and incorporated; other areas seeking improvements have also been addressed fully.

## Approach and methodology

5. Convergence of purposes, skills and specializations were the key elements in defining the approach to the assignment. First of all, Sunai, PROACT and Nalanda forming a

consortium on the basis of distinct specialties respectively on quality of education, social exclusion and data-management was an important step. While the core technical supports were sought from the consortia, UNICEF indicated that the primary research may be assisted by its district level workforce. Although, the proposal of using its own workforce suited the given situation where the study was due for a rapid accomplishment, it did bear apprehensions about quality of the field processes and relevant data. In hindsight, it seems that the decision was progressive and appropriate.

#### First hand, rapid appraisal of school conditions

6. Once the study was contemplated, before the study tools were designed, a rapid appraisal one school (Patna, Gaighat) was carried out. A rather detailed discussion with teachers, separately with the head master, was undertaken to perceive list of issues from the teachers' community and from the perspective of management of the schools. A random and unstructured discussion was facilitated with children. The appraisal, added with physically viewing school conditions, rendered insights about issues under reference and helped in designing questions; especially the FGD tools.

#### Review of department's circulars, discussion with officials

7. A discussion with joint director of the department amounted in collection of a range of documents \_ publications, brochures, annual report and concerned circulars. These were carefully reviewed, analysed in light of needs emanating for the assessment under reference was specific portions enumerated for special mention in the report. ToR 4 of the report makes use of the understanding developed through the methodological exercise. This also helped define scope for review of secondary documents/ information.

#### Discussion with UNICEF officials to concretize scope of the assignment

8. Once the methodological tools were submitted to UNICEF for review, a detailed deliberation was convened. The discussion with UNICEF officials not only helped the consortia understand specific expectations and preferences assigned to the assessment; it clearly indicated areas where deeper learning is not required as the previous assessments and overall status of the schools clearly suggest interventions. Sample stratifications, sample sizes were firmed up and UNICEF's assistance in field assessment through its workforce was introduced. It was agreed that despite specific experience and adequate field exposure, the UNICEF field researchers would need to under a specific orientation to the study objectives, relevant methodologies, tools and protocols.

### Training of field investigators

9. A two-day training session was designed for the field researchers and was convened in Patna engaging selected district level workforce of UNICEF nominated to discharge role of field researchers. Perspectives, concepts and contexts associated with the assessment were deliberated, debated and settled as a shared assumption for the assessment emerged by the end of the first day. Need for sharing socially oriented assumptions was described to the investigators to ensure quality of investigation. The tools were elaborated, reviewed, consulted and improved wherever needed. A shared code of conduct and protocols for administering the methodological tools were evolved. Finally, a roaster of field visits was conceived; UNICEF's state coordinators taking the responsibility of facilitating field research and date for submission of the field data was defined. Quality of the data and deliverables by the field researchers were made clear.

### Collection and review books being taught, question papers for past years and syllabi and curricula being followed

10. Set of books for specified subjects under review \_ Mathematics, Science and Language \_ being taught in these schools were collected for review, were comprehensively reviewed to draw parity with national curriculum framework (NCF) 2005. The question papers for past years were too collected for review to analyse the pattern of questioning and learn the perspectives behind designing of question papers. Syllabus and school routines were collected; relevant circulars were reviewed to develop relevant understanding.

### Review of secondary materials

11. A scope for secondary assessment was evolved keeping in perspective the terms of reference embedded in the UNICEF assessment. A bibliography has been attached with the report to suggest actual coverage of secondary materials. The assessment observed that drawing comparison of the program under reference with that of others in other Indian State is difficult as not many documents are available in internet. There is all possibility that statutory provisions and norms applied on similar programmes of other states and of Government of India exist in public domain; however, could not accessed by the study team owing to its non-availability in internet.

## Field level assessment

12. The assignment adopted the approach to qualify the field observations of the field researchers against those made by a range of stakeholders, argue the difference with the help insights acquired from the earlier reports. Collating the diverse range of observations made by 26 field researchers from UNICEF, a team comprised of 3 distinct organizations and a range of stakeholders was not easy. For each of such, we considered that all seem to bear rich experience concerning education; however, often grossly partisan. Therefore, validity of the observations stood extremely important to make the assignment authentic and credible.

13. Converging researcher's intra-member perspectives was an initial challenge. A standard guideline was issued for the researchers to extract common written deliverable (attached in part -2 of the report). An intensive orientation session was conducted to even out divergent perspectives of the UNICEF field researchers and of the consortia team members. Tools were explained with a shared interpretation, clearly underlining field proceedings to be undertaken and those not.

14. Quality of information, observations and evidences were assigned highest significance. Photographic evidences, voices from the stakeholder especially those do not get chance to participate and influence the schooling administration and management - - parents of children and dropped out students. Indeed, as regards focused groups were concerned, interactions with the enrolled children generated excellent set of information and provided deep insights about range of schooling practices.

15. The methodology of the assignment was contemplated in tune with UNICEF's own definite thinking of (a) a prompt but in-depth assessment of the schools, with a valid and all-encompass sample and (b) align the assessment more around qualitative issues, through qualitative research methods. The second consideration was made in view of UNICEF's another study on infrastructure survey of all schools in Bihar functioning as part of the SC, ST Welfare Department's programme. Below, a structured description has been furnished on methodologies and scope of methodological tools.

### **A description of tools applied in primary study : purpose and framework of analysis**

16. The tools, a mention of which has been made in column 3, are compiled in part – 2 of the report. Although quality of the deliverables was nowhere close to expectation, the FGDs

generated excellent quality primary data in terms of perception of stakeholders. A brief account of the methodology and tools is as under -

<b>Methodology &amp; scope</b> (with brief guideline to conduct the tool)	<b>Description of deliverable</b>	<b>Schedule ref., sample size &amp; responsibility</b>
<p><b>Firsthand observation</b></p> <p><i>One formats per school to be filled up with adequate details. Given investigators' judgement, additional information may be furnished on (a) reasons/ factors, (b) feared irregular/ mal practices, (c) strength or lack of managerial competencies/ supervision etc. in defining level existing status : School infrastructure &amp; maintenance etc.</i></p>	<p>The <b>format</b> must be <b>filled up</b> with multiple choice answers, as directed. However, additional observations on the status of issues under reference would be encouraged to record. <b>Separate sheets</b> may be applied to record such observation.</p>	<p>Schedule – 1 : School profile (13); UNICEF Investigators</p>
<p><b>Focus group discussion</b></p> <p><i>One FGD per school. Picking a group of cohesive children preferably from higher classes (9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup>). Please allow spontaneous participation of children as per their comfort within the group. The group may not less than 10 and not more than 20. Some of the participating children may not appear articulate; however, please bear so as these may be instilling confidence on other children participants. Avoid teacher's insistence on particular children's selection unless seem justified for the purpose of the FGD.</i></p> <p><i>There could be some questions which the children may not understand, respond to required intricacy. In such cases, the investigator would require to (a) take help of filler questions, (b) be lucid and simplify the question with easy &amp; localized examples; however, not guide the children to suggestive answers. Investigators must take care that the purpose of the FGD is affected due to inadequate/ inappropriate interpretation of the issues under reference (ref. report part 2 : checklist of issues).</i></p>	<p>Description of discussion in narrative detail against each pointer/ question/ issue. <b>For each pointer, the description may run into 2-5 short sentences</b>, taken as note; to be later expanded with adequate meaning and analysis. Investigators' own analysis would be invited with a caution to avoid his/ her own perception affect the discussion.</p> <p>There could be non-verbal dimensions seeking to be recorded. FGD notes eventually may be expended into <b>5-10 pages</b>, to be submitted as deliverables, names of each of the children enumerated to end the report.</p>	<p>Schedule – 2 : Enrolled children (13); UNICEF Investigators</p>
<p><b>Question-based written test</b></p>	<p>Appropriate spaces have</p>	<p>Schedule – 3 :</p>



Methodology & scope (with brief guideline to conduct the tool)	Description of deliverable	Schedule ref., sample size & responsibility
<p>30-40 children per school stratified from classes 5<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> &amp; 10<sup>th</sup> respectively with batches of equal no. of children ranging between 10 to 13 nos. per class. The multi-level test papers may take between 3-6 hours of written test; rather individually, though children would be arranged to seat in groups. The twin investigators would be expected to conduct written test of one batch at a time and assign full attention to the group. Thus, test for three batches may take maximum 2 full days. Children may be selected through name-chits.</p>	<p>been indicated in the question papers, allowing the children to answer. However, in case of need, additional sheets may be provided by the investigators.</p>	<p>Learning attainment test (460); UNICEF Investigators</p>
<p><b>Semi-structured Interview</b></p> <p>To approached in the manner of tacit &amp; soft interpersonal discussions, through semi-structured &amp; issue-defined interview : would be carried out by the twin team of investigators together each taking up distinct responsibility of (a) anchoring the discussion, and (b) recording detailed note. Here too, in case the investigators finds it relevant to record non-verbal observations - - expressions like <b>fear, shyness, pride, anger, hesitation</b> etc., may feature in discussion; should take liberty to make mention of these. In no case, investigators should try to make conclusive observation based on its own assumption and switch with the responder on the subsequent issue(s). However, analysis of the investigator while recording a given observation is keenly invited.</p>	<p>Similar to the way the FGD is to be recorded, description of discussions may be written in narrative details against each pointer/ question/ issue. <b>For each pointer, the description may run into 2-5 short sentences</b> forming 1-2 paragraphs. While such is taken as note, these could be later expanded with adequate meaning and analysis. Investigators' own analysis would be invited with a caution to avoid his/ her own perception affect the discussion.</p>	<p>Schedule – 4 : Parents of enrolled children (200-460); UNICEF Investigators</p> <p>Schedule – 5 : Drop-out children's' parent (65); UNICEF Investigators</p>
<p><b>Semi-structured Interview</b></p> <p>As indicated for schedule – 2, the children may not always be able to get the meaning of the questions/ understand the meaning behind them. The investigator in such cases would be patient with the child, simplify the question and render appropriate example so that the children's feelings can be heard and recorded. Also here, non-verbal expressions too may be mentioned to aid analysis of the observation (as indicated in schedule 4 &amp; 5).</p>	<p>There could be possibilities of non-verbal dimensions seeking to be documented. The <b>interview report</b> eventually may be expended into <b>5-7 pages</b>,</p>	<p>Schedule – 6 : Drop out children's (65); UNICEF Investigators</p>

<b>Methodology &amp; scope</b> (with brief guideline to conduct the tool)	<b>Description of deliverable</b>	<b>Schedule ref., sample size &amp; responsibility</b>
	to be submitted as deliverables, name of the protagonist clearly enumerated at the end of the report.	
<b>Semi-structured Interview</b> <i>Five teachers per school would be interviewed. The teams assigned would be extended detailed guideline.</i>	Detailed analytical report to be generated as per the guideline and framework indicated	Schedule – 7 : Teachers (25); Consultants
<b>Firsthand observation</b> <i>One formats per school to be filled up with adequate details. The teams assigned would be extended detailed guideline.</i>		Schedule – 8 : Classroom observation (5); Consultants

### Areas that need improvements in such assessments

**17.** Despite making a credible recovery through the excellent quality of voices registered by the stakeholders and thus the report not getting impacted much, the fear of loose execution of the methodology was proved true around the field researchers. None of the field researchers were able to comply with the shared protocol especially when it came to submission of deliverables to a committed quality. Whereas learning attainment tools were designed to capture the relevant observations to be complied naturally by the students writing the answers; the FGDs and interviews were worst impacted due to inadequate attention of the field researchers. It was observed, the field researchers could not involve themselves as part of a competitive process of excellence, seemingly were reluctant by themselves as their own performance standards were recognized as low. From the point of view of research needs and going by the protocols, the deliverables were found to be rather ordinary.

**18.** Fundamentally, not many field investigators were found to have adequate social orientation or sensitivity towards the issues of exclusion; albeit, these were observed to be competent on technicalities of education. None seemed convinced with the rationale of such a programme, many in fact challenging the very idea of an exclusive programme for SC & STs, fearing furtherance of social divide! The field researchers were also found demanding in terms of their perspective about rights-based approaches and affirmative actions that the

state obliges to the deprived sections. The 2-day orientation could make an interim impression aiming the field investigators to rise to such special occasions of qualitative research and having an opportunity to interface with sensitive voices around persistent denials perpetuated to the already most marginalized. The purpose was largely served.

**19.** Quality issues in research : Appropriate data collection, capturing the data and validating the data etc. have come across as a weak link in the current assessment owing to inadequate understanding and experience of the field investigators in qualitative research. When the consultants referred to significance of 'testimonials' seeking careful collection, collation from the field, a rather low level of appreciation was manifested by the investigators. This observation is based on the quality of deliverables submitted.

### **A critique of the 'scope of the work' of the current assignment; future research needs**

**20.** The consortia unambiguously records rich experience and learning gained from the current assignment. While the scope of work was being contemplated, participants in the consortia agreed to them almost uncontested on all issues. Also, key members in the consortia believed that the exercises to be perceived under the assessment to probe into the scope of issues would bring in the core learning seeking logical improvements in the schools and in the overall programme.

**21.** However, with growing understanding about the programme, especially visiting the schools, speaking to range of stakeholders and importantly, reading the reports of the earlier assessments/ studies, the consortia could appreciate that even for the issues under current reference, several learnings were generated in the past deliberations. It was worth considering, which UNICEF also indicated during the preparatory discussion with the consortia that *reasoning of the findings* and *bringing sharp, workable recommendations* would be the key focus of the current assessment.

**22.** In the hindsight, this report wishes to record that to extract relevant and effective learning, make pragmatic, actionable and precise recommendations, few more in-depth assessment must be sought. These can be segregated against distinct issues :

- **Administrative issues** impacting schooling issues, especially those related to access and quality of education. Flow of decisions down an administrative structure which is often not programmatically oriented, affects programmatic texture and milestones. Time and motion assessment of such decisions must be studied.

- **Financial allocation**, flow management and financial administration must be studied to bring in organic improvements aligned to updated & standard practices. Concerned roles and responsibilities may be evolved within an accountability framework - - mechanisms and measures may be contemplated to create cushion at the operational level, something that eases restraints of mandated expenses in the times of financial crisis and delay (such as creating school level disposition funds).
- **Human resource development issues** – not alone around teachers, which shall be the core of assessment albeit; also in consideration of non-teaching workforce (programme administration and school administration & management, those required to support co- & extra-curricular aspects). Here, a rather fluid structure responsible for monitoring and tracking school performances, progressing in alignment of changing mainstream educational environment must be addressed for a structured and result-oriented change. Performance guarantee contracts (PGC) may be evolved through such studies for infusing credible, professionally competent and committed teaching and managerial services in the programme.
- Finally, special deliberations may be instituted in **mapping gaps** within the programme and seeking relevant resource assistance. Such assistance may be largely non-teaching; indeed aiding quality teaching-learning processes and improving classroom transaction. To list a significant few, such resource supports may be perceived in terms of (a) development of prototypes of books, exercise books, worksheets customized to the needs of SC and ST children (and respective girls with special focus) across primary and secondary classes, (b) development of customized TLMs (c) range of teacher development programmes in a decentralized manner and (d) creating and managing parameter-based progress tracking mechanisms.

## **ToR – 1:**

*The whole gamut of issues around quality education – including curriculum, syllabus and text books, teachers’*

*knowledge and capacity, nature of class-room transactions, pupil evaluation systems, TLM used, achievement levels of students across the grades, extracurricular activities, adequacy or otherwise of infrastructure and facilities affecting quality of education.*

### **Highlights -**

- *The schools are adhering to the state’ curriculum and syllabus. However, when comes to application of National curriculum framework, it lags in all fronts \_ books, pedagogy, TLM and classroom processes*
- *Learning attainment shows distressing scenario in all subjects under reference \_ mathematics, science and language. Children seem to lose competency progressively with higher classes*
- *Learning elements show, children are better on self-initiated aspects & in free expression. However, they are extremely poor in issues seeking imagination & creativity*
- *To begin, teachers’ subject proficiency demands immediate strengthening. Reviving pedagogical skills seeks renewed focus.*
- *Teachers’ competence observed on subject proficiency and knowledge, sensitization on social exclusion, inter-teacher and teacher pupil relationship and vision for institutional development : Competency levels are worryingly low*
- *Teachers’ development seem to seek a generation change; roles in institutional development, mentoring and in soft skills. Building teachers’ capability to handle basic administration and managing school functions need urgent redressal.*

## Quality of education/ development and education

**23.** The National Curriculum Framework (NCF) recognizes the need for a holistic education that not only develops a child wholly but also encourages children to stay in school, discover their own potential and foster a confidence in their personal learning ability. The framework underscores the importance of an education that is not just representative of India's diverse cultures and communities but also welcoming and nurturing to them. In order to ensure the same, particularly in the context of quality of education, features and parameters such as relating textbook knowledge to the external world, relieving education from routine and regimented learning, development of a curriculum that ensures holistic development of children instead of being restricted and centered around books and syllabus, developing a flexible examination system related to classroom activities and also inculcating an understanding of democracy are all highlighted by the National Curriculum Framework as being vital to the process of education.

**24.** The framework goes as far as to say that pronounced "caste divides" can be observed amongst those who have completed their education and those who have dropped out/been unable to complete their education. Not only does quality education seem out of reach to poor communities but those who avail it do not benefit from an education and learning experience that is similar to the rest of India. The popular view of private schools being superior to 'free education' is based on the realization of better results in the case of private schools. Such yardsticks for measuring the 'quality of education' based solely on results ignore the importance of parameters such as school atmosphere, facilities and softer issues such as teacher student relationships.

**25.** There is a lack of general freedom in thought, expression and even imagination in classrooms. School and classroom plans are not only dysfunctional but redundant and boring, the element of *residentiality* being buried under the onerous task of delivery of substandard information in a dismal style. An orientation in the elements of quality of education and its necessity in the context of SC/ST residential schools is essential for their speedy resuscitation.

## Syllabus and curriculum

**26.** It may be noted that SC ST residential schools are following the state curriculum. This has its positives in that the children from these schools will appear for the same board exams as those of children from other schools and as such allowing them to excel in the same curriculum provides them a competitive advantage from the examination perspective.

**27.** However, it may be noted that the mainstream education curriculum in practice is often cryptic and needs revision in view of newer and better modes of learning; in crux, possibly seeking better adherence of directions as per the NCF. Such revision among others would immensely benefit the SC/ ST children as well. There are two things, which are important here--firstly, such revision if made within the framework and guidance of the NCF would automatically address issues of social inequality, discrimination and social exclusion. This in turn would address a number of SC/ ST related dynamics. Secondly, the current curriculum in general does not provide adequate space for holistic development of a child's mind as it leaves a child's creativity, power of expression, imagination and scope of free thinking largely unexplored. In view of the dual concerns, and the dual benefits that stand to be gained through such a revision, it can and should be strongly recommended.

**28.** It is obvious that textbooks would essentially flow from a curriculum and the ideologies behind the same. In this light, certain aspects of the existing textbooks are important, as they need a change to usher in better teaching learning practices. A vital dimension here is that the existing textbooks are essentially teacher-centric rather than children-centric. Chapters as well as exercise designs all indicate at a 'close-ended' learning, where there is very little scope for a child to learn on his own or through interaction with peer groups without instruction from a teacher. Even in terms of science subjects, where learning may rather be experimentation-based it is more rote-bound. Instead, textbooks that enable a child to understand and formulate scientific hypothesis and then experiment with the simplest ingredients available in the child's natural environment need to be incorporated.

**29.** Another vital aspect that must essentially be considered while developing textbooks for children is that of the appearance of books – essentially attractive enough to entice the child to take the steps within its covers. Currently, this is also an aspect that has substantial gaps. The quality of prints and paper leave scope for improvement. Essential ingredients like font size and clarity of print must be considered here.

**30.** Again, it has been observed that the SC/ ST residential schools, often all cases, are limited to exposure to their curriculum textbooks only. In such cases contextual supplementary reading material must be provided to increase the scope of learning. For example, for junior classes like classes I to III, pictorial storybooks may be considered. It is pertinent to increase the exposure by library-based addition to current books. It is also required to look beyond stringent library periods and integrate library based materials into general teaching learning to make it a lot more holistic and educationally empowering. While development of curriculum and text books along the lines would take a gestation period, it

may be considered suitable to develop workbooks for the children in addition to the text books.

**31.** In classrooms and schools where multilevel teaching of combined classes is prevalent, the syllabus and curriculum of students is often jumbled or ignored entirely this leads to problems not only in conceptual understanding but a devastating overload on the minds of young children. In the case of SC/ ST residential schools, books and syllabus have not been revised since as long ago as 1984.

**32.** The NCF suggests the intervention and consultation with NGOs, academicians and other experts in the field to improve and update school curriculum, textbooks and syllabuses in order to keep alive the contemporariness of instruction being imparted in schools.

### **Classroom transactions and pupil evaluation**

**33.** The NCF gives ample and illustrative examples for ideal classroom and out of classroom work for children and teachers. Encouraging children to think and express themselves freely without the constraints of books has been emphasised, activities such as group discussions and extempore speaking for improving debating skills and forming logical conclusions as well as improved speech delivery hold an essential place in a holistic education. The use of essay writing based on observation of day to day activities and circumstances, nurturing imaginative answers and descriptions to add multidimensionality to the thinking and writing process of a child have all been considered paramount to the learning system.

**34.** Activities that involve children and teachers informally such painting competitions between both, events to interact freely and see a more humane and vulnerable side of teachers also helps ease the tension of teaching and learning. Schools being social spaces, the NCF recognizes the rife attitude amongst teachers to delegate class/cleaning work (often unconsciously) based on the caste of a child; such delegation of duties and incongruities have been described as being extremely damaging to the child and classroom atmosphere.

**35.** It was observed that pupil evaluation in SC/ ST schools was grossly inconsistent and one-dimensional, based entirely on marks obtained. The child's qualities, talents, individual nature, personality and growth are completely ignored in evaluating performance. This lack of appreciation as an individual child, possibly coming from an illiterate background, a first generation learner facing violence and criticism as a SC/ ST in his/her own village can be a reason for children feeling incomplete despite being educated. To feel special, proud of



being a student and of availing an opportunity to learn perhaps requires more than a report card with average marks.

### **Teachers' knowledge and capacity**

**36.** The general benchmarks for teacher's quality and competence depend upon their selection and training process as well as their accountability within schools. Teachers' knowledge becoming deskbound and stale negatively affects not only the quality of instruction but also the teacher's own capacities.

**37.** In schools such as SC/ ST residential schools with fewer teaching staff alternating between senior and junior classes and often combining classes, the teachers do not change their posture/teaching style in accordance with the age group they may be teaching. This can be detrimental especially to younger children who develop an inherent dislike for the pedantic learning systems of their classrooms.

### **Teaching learning materials (TLM)**

**38.** While the NCF recognizes the need for a fearless atmosphere for optimum learning and growth, education and learning in SC/ST residential schools is far from being fearless and friendly to children who live and learn in the same classrooms with meager facilities (if any) day after day. The vibrance and playfulness of coloured, friendly classrooms with interesting learning materials that encourage children to think and relieve teachers from the cumbersome constraints of books and chalk are a far cry from what the children receive in fair measure daily, in SC/ ST residential school classrooms. The lack of even basic learning aids such as globes, libraries, coloured charts is holding children back from not only achieving better grades but even from being interested in what the study. It is inculcating in them the "learn by heart and reproduce" attitude which the NCF is so violently against.

## Learning attainment

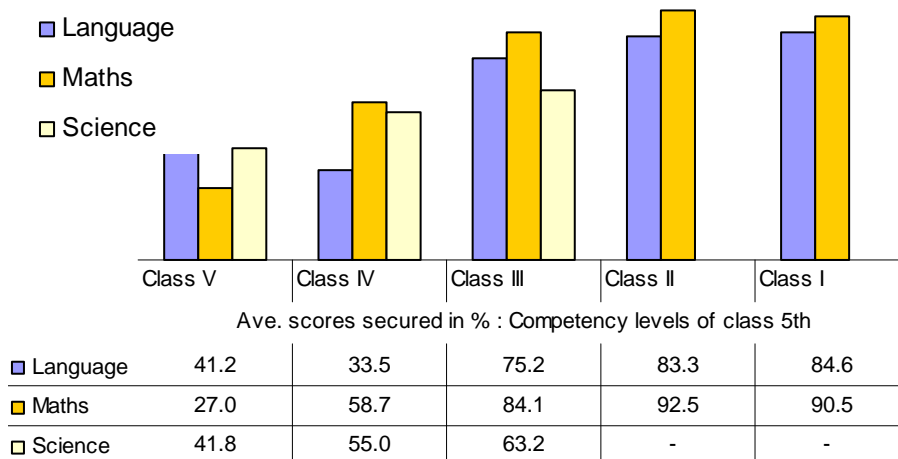
**39.** It may be appreciated that findings of the learning attainment must not be seen as something unexpected. The SC, ST Welfare Department, UNICEF and teachers interfaced while carrying out a preparatory process indicated that learning attainment would prove to be dismal; however, it was agreed that the degree of it must be appraised through the assessment. The multi-level questions papers were made to suit children of class V, VIII and X; however, derive their competence levels for all the classes. The following paragraphs, respective charts alongside, may be seen as evidence and manifestation of the school conditions; something that the study terms as are ‘alarming’.

**40.** Assessments were made for common subjects of Mathematics, science and language for all the three standards. For class V, the results suggest that on an average, children secure around 40% marks in science and language; however, attainment drops to below 30% in mathematics. Considering an 80% marks indicative of adequate competency for a class, the study records that class five students, on average, are competent for class 3 in mathematics and class 2

for language (ref. chart -

1). Students failed to secure competence level of class III, by average of aggregate of three subjects! It was interesting to note, children of class V could not attain full competency of 100% even for class I for subject like mathematics!

Chart - 1 : Level of competency for ave. student of class 5th (in %)



**41.** Experts suggest that a competency level for a class may be best demonstrated by pupil securing more than 80% marks. However, it is indicated that in context of variety of factors, the attainment level may be negotiated to securing of 60% marks in difficult schooling conditions. In light of exclusive and dedicated schooling facilities; however, lack of teaching staff in many schools, learning attainment in the current study has been measured in three categories : more than 80%, between 60-80% and those less than 60% being considered having no equivalent competence.

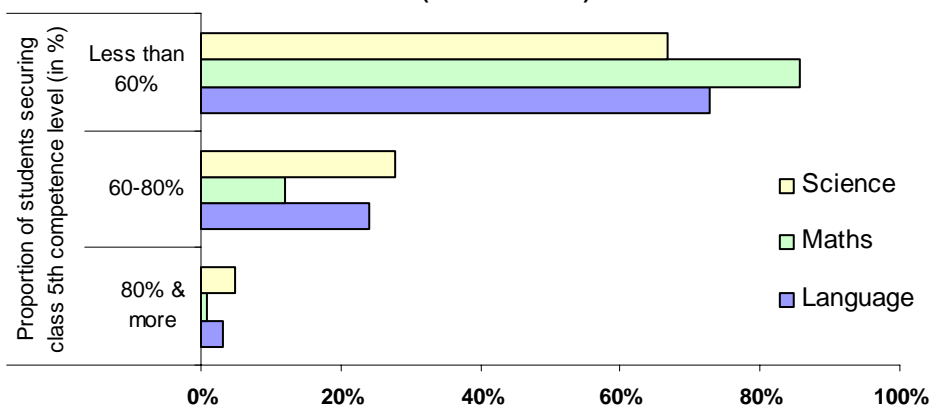
**42.** Only 5% or even less percentage of children found having an attainment level of 80% or more in any subject. A gross 67% to 86% pupil proved not having adequate competency in the referred subjects (Ref. chart – 2).

Mathematics and science stand especially dismal.

**43.** Might seem shocking; but quite expectedly manifested as evidence of the prevailing school condition, class VIII students were observed to acquire no competency level for classes third to eighth. While competence levels for subjects language and science show some degree of attainment (scoring above 50% across class III to VIII), competence level in mathematics slide down from 69% for class III to a meager 29% for class VIII (ref. chart - 3).

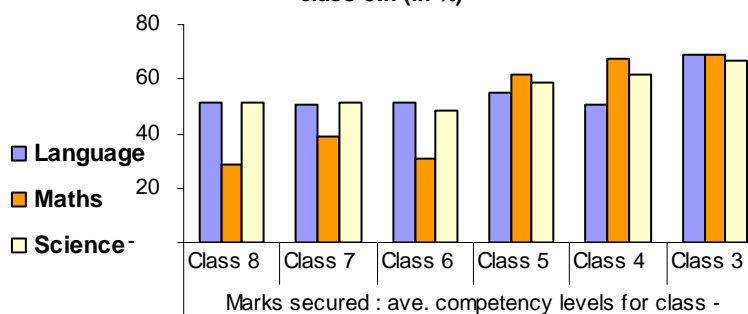
**44.** Better than class V students, 8-13% of class VIII students registered competence levels of 80% and above in the 3 subjects. Pupil’s misery in mathematics continues as 85% of children were unable to secure even

**Chart - 2 : Proportion of students attaining competency levels for class V (minimum 80%)**



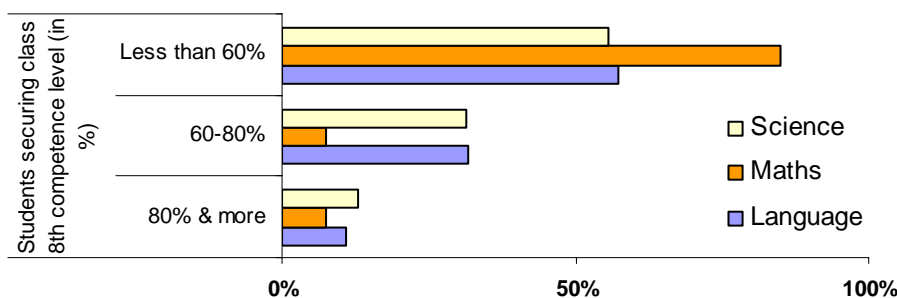
	Proportion of students securing class 5th competence level (in %)		
	80% & more	60-80%	Less than 60%
Science	5%	28%	67%
Maths	1%	12%	86%
Language	3%	24%	73%

**Chart - 3 : Level of competency for ave. student of class 8th (in %)**



	Marks secured : ave. competency levels for class -					
Language	51	51	51	55	50	69
Maths	29	39	31	62	67	69
Science	52	51	48	59	62	66

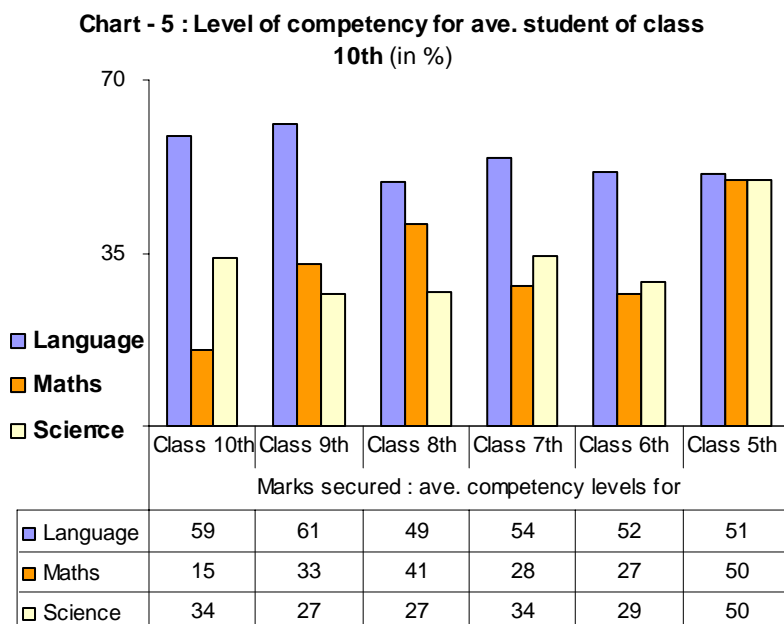
**Chart 4 : Students securing competency levels of class 8th (in%)**



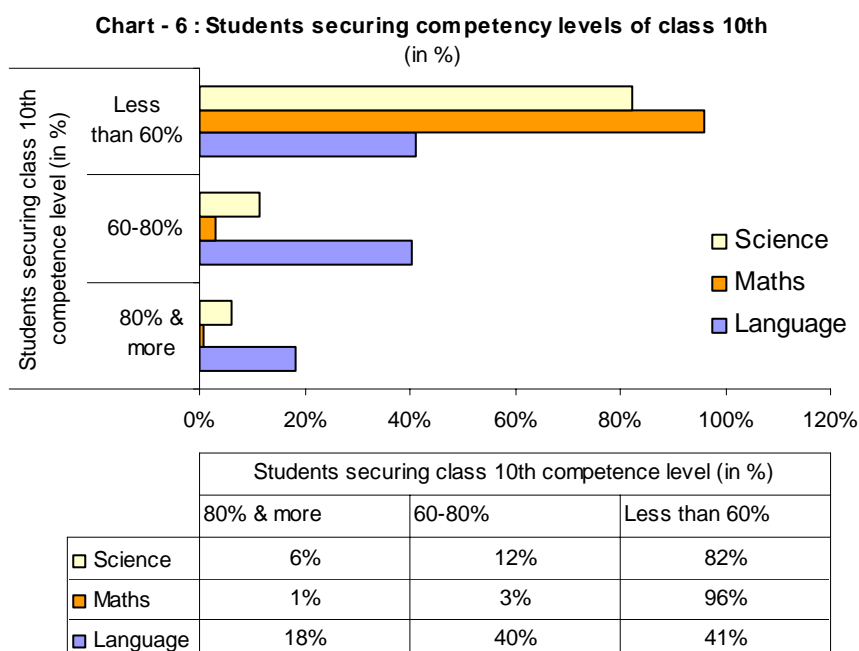
	Students securing class 8th competence level (in %)		
	80% & more	60-80%	Less than 60%
Science	13%	31%	56%
Maths	8%	8%	85%
Language	11%	32%	57%

60% of class VIII standard. In science and language some 44% and 43% children respectively secured more than 60% marks (ref. chart 4).

45. At class VIII level, the children generally showed some competency level in language, through inadequate. Mathematics still plays a spoilsport, the children having secured a mere 15% marks on an average. The basic, however, remains unaltered – no class X children observed to attain competence levels for the subjects under review for classes 10<sup>th</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> (ref. chart - 5).



46. Finally, following the trend, class X students too show the level of performance in expected lines. Merely 1% children securing more than 80% in mathematics and 96% not even securing 60%; consistently the schools explicitly suggest weakness in the subject all across. The competence level in science gets exposed at class 10 level with 82% children not even securing 60%. Children’s ability in language comes as a saving grace (ref. chart - 6).



**Mapping students’ competencies – emerging patterns**

47. While poor attainment levels were observed somewhat in expected lines, the present assessment considered if any specific learning pattern is emerging from the learning attainment tests. Barring exception, it was observed that children from classes V, VIII and class X have definite parity in manifesting weakness/ strength in learning element. As the learning test papers were designed to assess whether or not specific elements learnt by the

children, the following sample matrix (1) for science subject suggests where the children demonstrated better attainment. Broad patterns are quite indicative, reasons and factors resulting children's attainment may be analysed in its light.

48. Though attainment levels observed consistently dropping while children progress to higher classes, for in specific elements the children showed their strength (ref. below – col. For class VIII and class V).

Matrix - 1 : Good performance in science

		Equivalent competency levels (across classes)									
		10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
<b>Class 10</b>	Q.1&2. Scientific information, Scientific logic.	Q.2. Use of scientific knowledge in health & hygiene.	<b>Q.1 &amp; 2.</b>	<b>Q. 1.</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>Q.1 &amp; 2.</b>					
<b>Accomplishment levels</b>	63%, 58%	65%	63%, 61%	60%	40%, 41%	83%, 75%					
<b>Class 8</b>		Q.1 &2. Use of scientific knowledge in health and hygiene. Use of scientific knowlwdge in environment protection.	Q.2. Guessing on the basis of scientific experience & logic.	Q. 2 & 3. Conceptual knowledge of reflection, Scientific information	<b>Q 1 &amp; 2.</b>	<b>Q 1, 2 &amp; 3.</b>	<b>Q. 1 &amp; 2.</b>				
<b>Accomplishment levels</b>		80%, 86%	70%	58%, 57%	83%,77%	82%, 77%, 72%	95%, 76%				
<b>Class 5</b>					Q.1 &4. To access one of the basis of science. Classification and knowledge of soluble and insoluble. Use of knowledge of science in our life and environment sensitiveness.	Q.1 ,2 &3. Classification, Characteristic of roots, Knowledge of science in respect of our daily life.	Q.1, 2&3. Classification & segregation, Matching & extacting the result, Observation.				
<b>Accomplishment levels</b>					96%, 78%	88%, 78%, 76%	93% 82%, 74%				

Note : Observations made specific to availability of data

49. Definite pattern may be observed for children's poor performance as well (ref. below matrix – 2 : class - VI, V and IV).

Matrix - 1 : Poor performance in science

		Equivalent competency levels									
		10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
<b>Class 10</b>	Q.3. Experimental knowledge	Q.3 Conceptual mathematical operations	<b>Q.4.</b>	<b>Q.4.</b>	<b>Q.1.</b>	<b>Q.5.</b>					
<b>Accomplishment levels</b>	12%	5%	11%	34%	18%	19%					
<b>Class 8</b>		Q.3. Classification & segregation based of scientific information	Q.5. Classification on the basis of scientific infromation.	Q.1 Experience of science in daily life	Q..5.	Q..4 & 5	Q.5.				
<b>Accomplishment levels</b>		30%	23%	27%	27%	31%, 17%	17%				
<b>Class 5</b>					Q.5. To access the understanding of a common natural phenonenon and the relation between Earth, Moon & Sun	Q.4&5. To access a complex process of plant, Understanding about a scientific process which can not be seen actualy, Scientific information.	Q.4. Science behind natural phenomonon & If Scientific information. (5)				
<b>Accomplishment levels</b>					24%	18%, 14%	22%, 26%				

Note : Observations made specific to availability of data

50. In a concise map, subject-wise learning performances of the children across 13 schools under reference have been compiled below. The charts below indicate good and poor performances of the children for specific elements in subjects under assessment.

51. For science, across classes, the children have shown consistently good performance are : (a) use of knowledge in real life, (b) guessing/ applying based

Science		Performance levels					
Sl.	Specific elements of learning/ qualitative aspects	Class 10		Class 8		Class 5	
		Good	Bad	Good	Bad	Good	Bad
1	<b>Concept / Principle</b> <i>Basic understanding of scientific concepts and principles related to natural phenomena such as reflection, photosynthesis etc; conceptual understanding of mathematical operations</i>	-			-	-	
2	<b>Use of / Application in daily life</b> <i>Use of scientific knowledge in health and hygiene, environmental protection and in daily life.</i>		-		-		-
3	<b>Classification / Segregation and observation</b> <i>Classification and segregation based on scientific information, classification based on characteristics of roots</i>		-	-			-
4	<b>Scientific Information</b> <i>Experimental knowledge</i>	-		-	NA	-	NA
5	<b>Scientific logic</b> <i>Guessing on the basis of scientific experience and logic</i>		-		-		-

on scientific experience (ref. 2 and 5). Both indicate children's own initiative!

52. Following, in context of mathematics too, without exceptions, children show definite pattern of weakness (ref. points 1 : power & roots to factors) and strength (ref. point 1 first few elements). However, for mathematics as such, attribute

Mathematics		Performance levels					
Sl.	Specific elements of learning/ qualitative aspects	Class 10		Class 8		Class 5	
		Good	Bad	Good	Bad	Good	Bad
1	<b>Concept / Principle</b>						
	Multiples and factors		-	NA	-	NA	-
	Root over		-		-	NA	-
	Integers		-		-	NA	-
	Fractions and operations		-		-		-
	Time	-	-	-	-		-
	Power and roots	-		-	-	-	-
	Sets	-		-	-	-	-
	Word problem	-		-			-
	Percentage	-		-		-	-
	Simple Interest	-		-		-	-
	Profit and loss	-		-	-		-
	Digit	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Ratio and proportion	-	-	-		-	-
	Factors	-	-	-	-		-
2	<b>Value of Numbers in different operations</b>	-	-		-	-	-
3	<b>Knowledge</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Basic shapes	-	-	-	-		-
	Basic operations of Maths (+, -, *, /)	-	-	-	-		-
	Patterns	-	-	-	-	-	
	Numbers	-	-	-	-		-

behind children's little ability to solve problems may not be associated to teachers' inadequate proficiency but on student's initiatives alone. The current assessment observes that for mathematics such analysis may not stand drawing intricate conclusions; rather, the department indeed must address the holistic issue of teacher's competency on the subject.

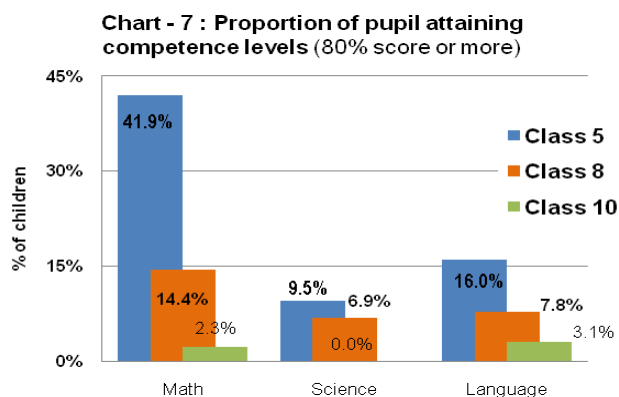
53. Language is a breathing space. As regards transfer of knowledge and information is concerned, the children have shown improved performances. However, when it comes to using subject or skill learnings for creative application, the children faltered (ref. point 6 above).

Language		Performance levels					
		Class 10		Class 8		Class 5	
Sl.	Specific elements of learning/ qualitative aspects	Good	Bad	Good	Bad	Good	Bad
1	<b>Expression / Writing</b> <i>Expression of thoughts, expression of understanding through writing, letter writing, sentence formation</i>	■	-	-	-	■	-
2	<b>Free thinking</b> <i>Writing about village, freedom of thought</i>	■	-	■	-	■	-
3	<b>Awareness</b> <i>General awareness</i>	-	-	-	-	■	-
4	<b>Reading and Understanding</b> <i>Word meaning</i>	-	-	-	-	■	-
5	<b>Technical understanding</b> <i>Identification of alphabet, grammar knowledge, reading and writing ability of alphabet</i>	-	-	-	-	■	-
6	<b>Imagination</b> <i>Expression, story writing based on leads such as an image or circumstance/ situation</i>	-	■	-	■	-	■

54. Here one must note, while the children’s performance have been attributed as ‘good’ and ‘bad’; indeed such have been derived based on average marks they secured in specific questions embedding specific elements. Largely, children’s performance when is attributed as ‘good’, can be measured from highest marks secured in the range of 40% to 83% **for class 10 students for science subject**. Needs no mention here, lower levels of accomplishment are for higher classes and vice versa (e.g. here scores around 40% are for class 10 tests and around 83% is for class V tests conducted on class 10). Similarly, **for class 8<sup>th</sup> students, for science**, range of scores have been recorded between 80% and 95% and **for class 5<sup>th</sup> students, for science subject** range of marks secured is between 96% and 74%. These are scores for specific solitary questions which have been best answered by the children and not for the overall subject performance.

**The conclusive picture**

55. Expectedly, gradual decline in children’s competence was observed while progressing in higher classes in all subjects (ref. chart - 7). Not only this, quantum of children attaining adequate competence levels (80% marks) is as low as between 0% to 3% dropping drastically from class standards of 42%-16%. For this, the entire range of inputs from teaching proficiencies to classroom transactions, TLM & pedagogy, may be held responsible.



## Teachers' profile and level of competence

**56.** Teachers' academic qualifications seemed adequate in terms of gaining proficiency in subjects other than mathematics, science and language. Most of the teachers have accomplished post graduation; very few also having professional degrees. With experience of teaching in the department's schools; not considered by them as a cutting edge qualification, the teachers stand qualified to count on conventional parameters. However, one must note here that the teachers were trained well before 10 to 20 years and wide range of contemporary teaching techniques needs to be upgraded with them.

**57.** The teachers have all acquired professional training in teaching. All appreciate, the training is worth coming to use on everyday teaching. However, lack of TLM and lack of adequate numbers of teachers and thus compulsion to deal with students from different classes and of varied levels of understanding, pose difficulty.

**58.** Teacher's understanding about quality of education seemed indistinct, lacked definite clarity. Most think, overall development of the student and imparting correct set of information from the teachers' perspective is the best attained quality of education. Also, higher job-orientation in education seems to be a major impression of the teachers about better quality of education. No teacher indicated student's real-life efficacy of educational learning as a key parameter or those of being imaginative to face challenges in life; make successful ways out to them when it comes to children from the SC, ST communities.

**59.** The assessment went about with a scientific hypothesis that the children from the SC & ST communities bear special qualities and some natural talent in singing, music, dance and sporting activities. Therefore, it was important to learn the teachers' orientation to such aspects of education and their proficiencies. Contrary to observations made by the study, teachers claimed that they engage in teaching and sharpening the skills of the children that show glimpse of any interest in such activities.

**60.** When it comes to students' need to earn and sharpen soft skills to succeed in the competitive mainstream education paradigm, teachers generally opined that separate school activities and relevant resource assistance may help the children earn such capabilities. Overall, given the scopes and needs of teaching, mentoring, counseling and also play some larger institutional roles, the current assessment concludes that the teachers as workforce must be explored to add quantum value addition. To do so, these need to bring in a sea change not alone in academic content but also in human & managerial attitudes. The following matrix allows vent the consortia's learning of the needs of these schools to have better & competent teachers.



61. The following matrix on teachers competency (termed here as unique competency parameters) have been assessed based on physical observations, rather in-depth discussions with each of the teachers. The scores have been reached based on collective perceptions drawn by the team of consultants. The matrix is not hypothetical and the observations made here may be elaborated and explained, if required, as they have been analysed from the perspectives of teachers' roles, duties, responsibilities and those as institutional heads. Names of the teachers and respective districts have not been mentioned to assign adequate privacy to these protagonists and adhering to research ethics.

Indicative unique competency parameters	Teacher - 1		Teacher - 2		Teacher - 3		Teacher - 4		Teacher - 5		Teacher - 6	
	Score	Particulars	Score	Particulars	Score	Particulars	Score	Particulars	Score	Particulars	Score	Particulars
<b>Subject proficiency &amp; knowledge (15)</b>	5	(a) Undergraduate Hindi - not a significant subject, (b) does not update his knowledge, (c) inherent bias towards subjects	5	Very conscious of his lack of formal degrees and uncomfortable teaching senior students	6	A qualified teacher, he shared the many load of teaching in the school especially important subjects such as Maths and science although his core competency was not related to either.	6	An experienced teacher, Chaubey was knowledgeable and recognized student potential but was not confident about his teaching prowess for senior classes.	7	Despite his double postgraduate degrees and interest in education & obvious enthusiasm for knowledge, his subject proficiency was not suited to classrooms at large. He was more comfortable theorizing than in logical reasoning.	6	Perceived more as an administrative officer, he was uncomfortable discussing his subject proficiencies and preferred instead to talk about his non-academic role in the school.
<b>Social orientation/ sensitization on social exclusion (20)</b>	1	(a) Despite 32 years of being a teacher in SC/ST schools he had no apparent empathy towards the children and their backgrounds, (b) being a Paswan SC himself, he was not oriented towards the special needs of his students	11	Being a tribal himself, he was not especially sensitive towards children, but certainly understood them and their circumstances better	1	Generally insensitive to the social background but has basic understanding and sensitivity to poverty. Threatened by boys 'tribal' nature.	0.5	Expressed at the very start that he was uncomfortable with SC boys and preferred teaching and managing girls on account of their more responsible and gentle nature. Felt students were not dedicated, rowdy and not 'brilliant'.	1	Only mildly sensitive to their poverty, not caste.	1	Harsh view on discipline and boys in general, felt the boys political leanings and activities were alarming.
<b>Inter-teacher/ teacher-</b>	1.5	As Headmaster, he was not a support figure for either his	3	Shouldered most of the school's administrative	3	Active and popular amongst teachers and students.	1	Teachers generally complained about his ineffectiveness and	2.5	Strict with children but shared a good relationship with all	3	Definitely more popular than the rest of teaching staff

Indicative unique competency parameters	Teacher - 1		Teacher - 2		Teacher - 3		Teacher - 4		Teacher - 5		Teacher - 6	
	Score	Particulars	Score	Particulars	Score	Particulars	Score	Particulars	Score	Particulars	Score	Particulars
<b>pupil relationship (5)</b>		teaching staff or his students. He was unapproachable and overwhelmingly indifferent to the needs of his school and its inmates at large.		responsibilities and was popular amongst students as well as teachers however he did maintain his distance for senior students.				inability to take a stand as a Headmaster. He did not interact much with students.		teachers including the Headmaster who counted on him for many an answer.		amongst children on account of his administrative role. He had been posted in the school previously and knew children better than most.
<b>Ins. Dev. Capacity (15)</b>	0	Did not come across as a convincing administrator in terms of overcoming limitations of his 62 year old school which continued to be as dismal as it was since it's inception.	0	Despite being a student of the same school, he added no value whatsoever to its future development. He had no original or for that matter any ideas for the development of the institution as a whole.	0	Had absolutely no views about the needs of the school and children, was too consumed with criticism about the children's discipline and his own desire to be posted out as soon as possible.	1	No views for institutional development, preferred to complain and compare the difference between girls and boys in terms of their obedience and sincerity.	6	Had multifarious views and suggestions for the development of the institution on all fronts especially hostel, overall facilities and quality of students. What he lacked was views and understanding of how to improve academics and instruction delivery, he did not recognize the shortcomings of teachers in the same at first.	1	Preferred to delve back into the previous days of the school when results were better, he had no views for the future apart from the enforcement of strict discipline and an improvement in quality of students.
<b>Soft skills &amp; leadership dev. Capacity (20)</b>	0	Due to his not being accessible to his students and frequent absences from the school, he hardly gets an opportunity to teach let alone inculcate soft skills or leadership amongst his students. He anyway does not	3.5	An apologetic seemingly intimidated individual conscious of his own beginnings as a tribal and lack of knowledge of English and computers were drawbacks to his own skills. He	0	Lacked both himself, he was uninterested in the use and application of the same and had no orientation about them either.	2	Although he himself was a soft teacher, he lacked the will to train boys in the same and kept his distance at all times. But he was oriented towards the importance of both, particularly in the context of girls, not caste.	1	Not a very charismatic teacher who could take up soft skills and leadership classes, he himself was not very confident about his personal leadership qualities. But he had a very basic understanding of the importance of	1	Far too occupied with his responsibilities and administration, completely unoriented towards softer issues such as the importance of English speaking, personality development etc and more concerned

Indicative unique competency parameters	Teacher - 1		Teacher - 2		Teacher - 3		Teacher - 4		Teacher - 5		Teacher - 6	
	Score	Particulars	Score	Particulars	Score	Particulars	Score	Particulars	Score	Particulars	Score	Particulars
<b>Student's counseling/ conflict Resolution capacity (15)</b>		consider these to be important as opposed to certain basic subjects.		however valued the importance of softer issues and skills as well as the development of leadership amongst children.						the same.		with discipline.
	0	He does not engage with students neither does he have their confidence for confiding in or mentoring, he is a serious entity on the campus who avoids conflict situations.	2	Being one of the more popular teachers on campus, he was generally interacting more with students	1	Did not share a particularly friendly relationship with other teachers and criticized students as well as teachers behind their backs. However was approachable to his students but candidly expressed his fear for their reactions if he enforced discipline.	0	Did not talk or interact much with students, did not even visit hostel or circulate around the campus. Was criticized by all teachers for being an ineffective Headmaster.	0	Did not share a very friendly relationship/mentor like image amongst students. Most teachers apart from the Headmaster kept him at bay.	2	Popular amongst teachers and students due to his previous posting in the same school and role on campus.
<b>Confidence &amp; overall presentation (10)</b>	2	The headmaster's obvious comfort and confidence emanated only from being on home turf and on the verge of retirement. However, despite this, he was a confident and presentable teacher in his subject of choice, Hindi.	4	More confident than most in his dealings with children and teachers, however his obvious discomfort with his academic competence in the subjects disturbed his presentation and confidence.	4.5	Talkative and confident especially with students. He was more impressive and easily inspired some amount of respect in his students.	3	Confident on account of his experience and formal post but lacking the will and impressiveness of a Headmaster. Biding time till his retirement, generally unhappy with the state of affairs yet not taking any measures to improve the campus atmosphere in anyway.	5	Was very confident about his 'teacher' status and general abilities on the school front. He was well spoken but was not an impressive personality overall or a role model in anyway.	4	Very confident in his dealings with children and other teachers, possibly due to experience and his inherent nature. Reflected upon his past often and was generally friendly with both teachers and students and executed responsibilities seamlessly.

**62.** Overall ratings based on the framework of unique competency parameters of the teachers looks depressing and even derogatory. Such observations must be compounded with a range of constraint that the teaching cadre engaged in these schools, which are often harshly pressing. The teachers deserve huge appreciation for surviving with whatever motivation they bear despite running schools in extremely difficult conditions not alone in terms of remote locations but also in difficult administrative and programmatic environments.

Indicative background of teachers	Assessment against select Unique competency parameters (UCP)							
	Subject proficiency & knowledge	Social orientation/ sensitization on social exclusion	Inter-teacher/ teacher-pupil relationship	Ins. Dev. capacity	Soft skills & leadership dev. capacity	Student's counseling/ conflict resolution capacity	Confidence & overall presentation	Total
Weightage	15%	20%	5%	15%	20%	15%	10%	100%
<b>Average rating</b>	<b>6.19</b> (41%)	<b>2.19</b> (15%)	<b>2.25</b> (15%)	<b>1.0</b> (7%)	<b>1.19</b> (8%)	<b>0.75</b> (5%)	<b>3.44</b> (23%)	
Teacher - 1 (M40) : An ST, product of the same school; teaches language	5	11	3	0	3.5	2	4	28.5
Teacher - 2 (M56) : SC, head master, teaches language	5	1	1.5	0	0	0	2	9.5
Teacher - 3 (M38) : OBC, teaches Mathematics	6	1	3	0	0	1	4.5	15.5
Teacher - 4 (M27) : SC, teaches computer – An engagement for 2 months in a year	7.5	1	2	0	0	0	3	13.5
Teacher - 5 (M58) : Gen. officiating head master; teaches sanskrit; visibly uncomfortable with students' hostility	6	0.5	1	1	2	0	3	13.5
Teacher - 6 (M56) : OBC, teaches language	7	1	2.5	6	1	0	5	22.5
Teacher - 7 (M54) : OBC, teaches language	6	1	3	1	1	2	4	18.0
Teacher - 8 (M32) : A minority, he teaches history. A graduate of physical education. He is a poet too and enjoys indulging in softer issues	7	1	2	0	2	1	2	15.0

63. To appreciate the contents of above framework, it is important to see through some cases which articulate teachers' profiles more in such unconventional domains.

## Teachers' profile – few cases

### Case – 1 : Kameshwar Prasad (Headmaster) (Badagaon ST residential school, Dist. Kaimur)

64. With 32 years of experience in teaching at SC/ ST residential schools, Kameshwar Prasad believes strongly in the importance of three subjects Mathematics, Sanskrit and Science. English to him is a skill one can learn if they need to. He did not show interest in expressing any views on the future of his students. However, he did express, what concerns him is the pending hostel building on his campus. He hopes it will be complete before he retires in two years.



65. Despite there being a gross lack of teachers on campus, with three of the staff teaching children from 1st to 10th grade, Sh. Kameshwar teaches Hindi when he finds time. He spends most of his time in the teachers' quarters, or travelling between his native town and the remote school which takes close to two hours from the nearest block. The Headmaster isn't too keen to discuss his views on the general student welfare, or on the possible improvements required. His attitude of 'what you see is what you get' is rather creates uneasiness to human sensitivities.

66. A graduate in Hindi and economics, Kameshwar has also completed his BTC training but doesn't find the learnings feasible to apply in a residential school. He doesn't remember the last time he visited the school kitchen or even the classroom cum living rooms of the children. He doesn't meet guardians or keep track of students leaving or coming to the school, such records and files are maintained by his juniors.

67. He is also not the first person to tell visitors about the two matches won by his students recently, a lack of ownership and pride in the school is evident in his general profile. There is also no discomfiture, fury or even sympathy regarding the living conditions of his students. The purely mechanical and just biding time relationship he exhibits with the school and its inmates is not inspiring from the head of school even for an individual who maybe frustrated and fed up of the general scenario after having contributed over three decades of his life to the service.

## Case – 2 : Suryavarth Singh (Badagaon ST residential school, Dist. Kaimur)

**68.** An alumnus of the Badagaon Residential School, Suryavarth did not ask to be posted back to the school where he learnt his a, b, c. The first tribal man to earn a matriculate, a BA and a government job from his block, the teacher was never aware of opportunities apart from the one he availed. Three decades ago, his school was almost the same except his classmates and he would gather wood most afternoons to keep their bonfires burning all night in order to protect themselves from the cold and lurking wild animals. His oldest memory of the school includes pressing his headmaster's legs till the man fell asleep, something his students won't do easily for him. Despite Suryavarth's qualifications he does not feel comfortable in school, he feels incompetent to teach the senior boys and is constantly aware of his lack of expertise in English even though he uses English phrases and words liberally. His consciousness is apparent even in interactions with fellow teachers, although his position as a member of the teaching staff is secure his own sense of self and pride emanating from being a first generation literate from a tribal background are grossly lacking.



**69.** Suryavarth as a role model is weak, despite his obvious credentials and job, he lacks the potential to inspire young boys most of which belong to his own community. He has been trained in using TLMs and supporting materials to teach but he lacks the will to use charts etc to make his classroom interactions more exciting for the little children he teaches. While Hindi has always been a subject close to his heart, he has never felt confident enough to write a short story, song, poem or article to express himself. Although he has read most of Premchand's stories and novels, he does not find it 'practical' to share these with his students.

**70.** A strong believer in Sanskriti and values, Suryavarth himself leads an austere life which he prides in. An ideal student's life and an ideal teacher's roles and image have always struck him as being vital to any school experience. His view of residential schools is limited to that of perhaps education in a normal day school, any extracurricular or personal development related and supportive activities are not seen as being necessary to such a school. For his own children, he plans an education in missionary schools in the block primarily because they are 'decent' and provide the best English speaking and writing skills. However, Suryavarth is quick to add that he has never been to a missionary school but these views and desire to enrol his children there are based on what he has heard and seen around him. While he has been applying for a transfer from the remote and lacking in most

basic facilities school since the past four years, he perceives even this simple act of giving and taking education for tribal children to be sheer good fate.

### Case – 3 : Siddique Ansari (Kudra SC residential school, Dist. Kaimur)

71. 32 year old Ansari from Aurangabad completed a BA in Physical Education and a MA in Urdu from Gujarat. He now teaches History to ‘every’ class in the residential school at Kudra. Posted as a Physical Education teacher, he isn’t usually the one who takes his students to the nearby stadium to play foot ball, he says they prefer going alone. Neither does he oversee the volleyball matches the children play on a patch of land which is home to a thriving population of pigs, goats and the occasional cow. Siddique isn’t sure when the boys took off the volleyball net which is in tatters and where exactly they kept it. He likes to keep a low profile while walking around the halls where the senior boys stay, he does not even jostle to find place amongst the students who rigged a little bonfire on the second floor. When students complain about the lack of facilities and the authorities for not providing ‘funds’ for more matches and sports gear, Siddique maintains a stoic silence and stares into the embers.



72. From as long as he can remember, his greatest joy has been his subject Urdu. The couplets of Mirza Ghalib often linger in his mind, finding no space for expression or sharing with his young students. He has not yet conducted a poetry recitation or writing contest, he feels shy to share his little hobby even with his colleagues. But he is quick to point out how the lack of discipline amongst students is a sheer reflection of the Principal’s ineptitude to manage the boys. He believes a strong Principal will set the pace for other teaching staff, who hesitate in reacting to the boys cheekiness and indiscipline out of the fear of retaliation or repercussions.

73. Since his family joined him in Kudra, Siddique has been more careful in keeping out of ‘controversies’. He has two primary school-going children and a young wife, whom he keeps outside the campus. As he walks through the corridors of the student’s dormitories, he avoids entering their rooms and stays away from the flooded toilet. At the school kitchen, he does not ask the NGO worker making the next meal to wash his knife; neither does he check where the junior most children are and whether they’ve eaten. His responsibilities are not definite although he tries to pass another school day carefully avoiding confrontations with his students and staff.

## **ToR – 2:** *The management of these schools vis-à-vis the involvement of stakeholders in running these schools.*

### **Highlights**

- *Facilities and basic amenities in the schools are depressingly bad and seek urgent redressal. The issue of educational quality seems susceptible without bringing such to a reasonable order*
- *School management seeks to ensure a tall order given the existing poor status of the schools. Even a layman's observation needs no analysis to suggest that the existing functional structure is not competent to address school management issues; even if their intent is not drawn to scrutiny.*
- *So is appalling the conditions of maintenance of school assets. In context of residential schools, even committed facilities to match moderate standard of living is a must to draw any extent of educational attention.*
- *The existing arrangement does not provide much space to engage in school management. It is strongly felt, as the parents of the children (of both those enrolled and dropped) explicitly indicated, parents' must be empowered to engage in school management. Forms and nature of such engagement, however, seek further deliberation.*



## Schools' profile

74. Detailed and candid school profiles were generated by UNICEF investigators guided through sound and all-encompassed template. The templates administered by the investigators enlisted range of provisions notified by SC, ST welfare department. The following paragraphs provide an account of infrastructure and facilities prevalent in the SC, ST residential schools. Given varied status from one to another school, a matrix furnished with information of definite pattern could not be presented.

### Facilities/ basic amenities

**74.** The status of **blackboards** in few girls' schools were observed to be alright; classrooms of select ST boys' schools had few blackboards and mostly of low quality. Blackboards in few SC boys' schools especially those in urban areas were observed to be of better quality while those located in remote villages were substandard. Interestingly, in almost all girls' schools, the teachers use blackboards regularly. This is usually to give girls questions to solve for the period or other tasks. If present, the blackboards are used occasionally and only in order to give tasks to solve.

**75.** Rather uniformly, use of **TLMs** in any school could not be observed. Unambiguously noticed by the investigators, there were no charts, globes, any scientific implements or slides used even for senior classes. Most teachers let students rely on the pictures in their textbooks (if any) to impart improved learning. However, it is interesting to note, perhaps due to some of their trainings, the teacher were aware of the importance of using attractive materials but not how exactly to use them. Few expressed, they were hesitant to do the same in boys' residential schools especially for senior students. On questioning teachers about their knowledge and use of TLMs, it was learnt that as per their past training what they retained most was the use of charts and how to formally prepare one's self (in terms of appearance and attitude) prior to entering and taking a class. This firmness/ formality was observed in their dealings/ interaction with students as well. The study learns, despite having basic training and orientation to teaching technicalities, there are acute practice level deficiencies - - possibly due to lack of relevant peer-group culture.

**76.** With regard to amenities, **drinking water** facilities were observed to be available in almost all schools. The local hand-pumps in the schools often observed to have twin use as a washing and drinking facility. *There are no particular provisions for glasses and the like for the children. Special provisions such as filtered/ boiled drinking water could not even be*

*seen in village schools*; apparently which is a need in few locations with low-quality water sources. The drinking water facilities available to few ST children are atrocious (Badgaon, Kaimur district). The school hand pump in Badgaon often serves as the only source of water for washing, bathing, cooking, toilet and drinking. In the case of especially remote schools, the water was observed to be rich in mineral content and sediments; schools not having the option of boiling the drinking water or even chlorinating it etc. As observed in such locations, most students suffer from stomach cramps perhaps due to poor quality water. These facilities are usually accessible to little children. However, in case of hand pump this maybe tedious for most girls particularly the younger ones .It was noticed that even though the water source is a hand pump and accessible to most little children, the boys especially the youngest have to do double the work in collecting/ filling water for their seniors' consumption. Drinking water facilities were anyway accessible to little children in all schools.

**77.** Despite having a large number of rooms in their buildings, all schools do not have a **library**. The functionality of the library and book lending practices could not be ascertained. ST boys schools located in remote villages, despite being older and with fewer facilities yet a larger number of rooms lack libraries. Whether libraries stock books on figures relevant to SC/dalit pride and struggle is to be seen. None of the schools SC girls/boys and ST boys have reading corners in their classrooms. Even though a few of these schools have libraries, it could not be ascertained whether they have dedicated reading periods or whether children can borrow books for their free time. There is no particular 'reading hour' or period. Newspapers and magazines of current affairs are unavailable to children, this gross lack of 'knowledge materials' is alarming, especially for residential schools.

**78.** All schools do not have **first aid facility**, particularly in urban schools. It was also noted that most teachers are not trained to provide first aid to students, something which seemed relevant for schools in remote locations. The lack of dedicated female teachers to help teenage girls experiencing menstruation for possibly the first time and related hygiene issues/ supplements/ sanitary napkins was also observed. Whether or not the residential schools maintain stock of such sanitary napkins and supplements with special care for the initial trauma and hesitation in young girls could not be seen/ observed. Hazardously, neither of the two schools of ST boys under reference located in quite remote villages have any first aid kits. Students generally resort to the aids administered by the local witch doctor or herbalist even in the case of snake bites. In schools where have modest medical kits, it could not be ascertained whether or not the teachers or the senior students were competent in using these aids or trained in administering in case of an emergency. No particular system was observed in place to check whether the medicines/ tonics/ tinctures had expired or not.

**79.** Very few schools have **dustbins** which are in use. None of the schools have any garbage disposal system.

**80.** All schools had **toilets**, although in some schools school teachers used the toilet built in the school campus while girls were expected to cross the road and use the residential toilets in the hostel even between classes etc. Select remotely located ST boys' schools did not have toilet facilities for its students although few are over five decades old. The children in some residential schools use the surrounding forest area instead. Interestingly, some schools which had toilets these were not used by students. Sometimes, even though the toilet had water facilities as well as cleanliness although. Although one of the schools had no running water in the toilet and was used frequently it was still clean. Since these schools do not have regular staff to clean the toilets or campus, it is possible that in a school located in an urban area the girls use and clean dry latrines themselves; this again despite the schools being quite old and the purpose of the school to foster a sense of dignity and opportunity in the minds of young scheduled caste girls. The study opines, such can hardly be conducive to their personal growth and sense of self worth.

**81.** Apart from the select above, all schools had water in the toilets. Whether **hygienic habits** such as washing hands before meals and after use of the toilet are taught to the young girls is uncertain, considering the residentiality profile of the schools and lack of female teachers or dedicated mentors especially in case of older girls, the study team sensed, these important lessons may often be left ignored. Only one school has water facility in toilets; however, even this school lacks cleanliness in the toilets. In cases where water was available, toilets were clean and used. Despite some schools being located in an urban area, with water facilities its toilets were not used.

### **Maintenance of school assets and infrastructure**

**82.** Overall, none of the schools had satisfactory or even basic upkeep/ maintenance of the school property. The lack of committed administrative staff may be of the primary reasons for the same. Despite most schools being located in urban areas, the general upkeep was low. The general upkeep and maintenance of the boys schools, which are generally older and located in remote villages are appalling and need immediate attention. Some were marked in having appropriate upkeep *this can be attributed to more teachers/ students/ senior students. It was also noted that schools with good maintenance generally had cleaner campuses and toilets. These facilities were maintained by students themselves.*

**83.** None of the **school classrooms** are orderly or attractive looking. As were observed, they are dull, lacking in materials that may enthuse the young girls and boys or give their creativity and imagination an arena. In the case of few ST boys' schools, most classrooms double up as living quarters for the children and have no desks, chairs or anything except beds and the children's home boxes/ trunks. Most walls have clothes and bags hanging from them. There are no timetables/ education related charts or anything in the classes.

**84.** It was observed that school classrooms have windows though they may not necessarily have bars or panes, a factor which girls expressed (in FGDs) as being upsetting and causing a sense of insecurity and discomfort. The findings also suggest that the classrooms have windows, yet not all are within the reach of the girl students. All the windows are within the reach of boys, the conditions however are not very good since most lack latches/ glass panes and in some cases, only bars are present with no wooden or metal shutters. This causes a lot of distress to students, particularly in the cold when boys tie sackcloth or plastic to the windows to keep their classes warm, which are often their living quarters as well. In some cases, old notebooks were stuck to window panes to bring some relief. While schools located in villages had appropriate ventilation, those which were in urban areas did not have very satisfactory ventilation. The classrooms had ventilation; however, possibly not in proportion to the number of children living in the 'classrooms' at night. Almost all boys' school classrooms were well ventilated. These schools are also generally endowed with mosquito nets, unlike select ST boys' schools which are located in far remoter villages in more hostile conditions and often in the forest.

**85.** Girls classrooms are generally clean although they are not attractive. These schools lack dustbins but have been observed as being cleaner than boys schools. ST boys' classrooms are generally clean, but some are untidy as they double up as living quarters for most of the schools. SC residential school classrooms tend to be more unclean and untidy as compared to girls and to ST boys. Interestingly, though the classrooms are dirty the campus of the school is usually clean and well maintained. This may imply that teachers in boys schools focus on keeping the outer campus clean in order to keep boys in check/occupied with 'constructive' activities; however, the same resolve is not seen as far as individual classrooms are concerned.

**86.** The quality of **flooring** was bad in most schools. Girls had also expressed this as being uncomfortable when they sit on the floor, particularly while wearing skirts. The quality of flooring in all ST boys' schools was observed as being bad, more often as extremely bad. It is not '*pukka*' and in the case of schools in remote villages, often a breeding ground for rats and snakes. Most schools were observed as having bad flooring, even though these may be

located in urban areas. Considering all these schools as having been operational and established for over 5 years at least, the conditions of classrooms are poor to an extent of disturbing academic & residential purposes.

**87.** As indicated above, not only do the girls' schools generally have bad flooring, their seating arrangement also was observed not of any good quality. Very few; however, which are located in urban areas have better seating arrangements. Since most of the classrooms serve as sleeping and living quarters for the children, there are beddings and trunks were observed to be lying against the walls. The hooks and nails in these walls have clothes hanging from them as do the corners of the window ledges. The seating arrangements are generally on the floor, in some cases senior boys have desks and chairs which are too few to create a classroom environment, let alone to study on. As the observations made by the investigators, visits of the study teams suggest, almost all SC boys' schools have bad seating arrangements, or none; similar to ST boys' schools.

**88.** There was **general cleanliness** around all the girls' schools. It must also be noted that in focused group discussions, girl students responded to 'cleaning school campuses' as being an extracurricular activity. The outskirts of and the school campuses of the ST boys schools are clean. Schools campuses were generally clean; however, the conditions of toilets and drinking water facilities may overall be seen as being disturbing and requiring immediate intervention. Most schools had clean areas around the facilities, a trend seen in almost all facilities in girls' schools.

### **Conclusive observations**

**89.** Overwhelmingly, as the general observation clearly indicates, most of the schools lacked cleanliness around the drinking water facilities. Even schools which had a clean campus did not necessarily have clean drinking water facilities.

**90.** Toilets were generally unclean particularly in schools located in urban areas. Whether toilets had special arrangements for girls such as dustbins/ boxes for sanitary napkins/ cloths could not be gauged. Toilets are generally unclean despite having water facility. The schools have a system whereby a cleanliness minister is chosen from amongst the students, his/ her duties include maintaining the cleanliness of the toilets. However, whether the exact duty includes cleaning the toilet by him/ herself, could not indeed be ascertained.

### **Open space/ playgrounds**

91. Despite being in existence for quite few years, not all schools have dedicated or developed playground. No sporting facilities such as swings etc. were seen in any of the girls' schools. Although the SC boys' schools were generally more developed than SC girls or ST boys, and in some cases older, these schools were seen as having no avenues for play at all! Playgrounds are usually frequented by the village cattle, thus become grazing grounds. Sometimes these are also home to squatters (in the case of urban schools) who, as were observed in several schools, disturb the daily functioning of the school.

92. Although nearly all girls' schools have open spaces in the school, whether these can be developed into playgrounds with swings, girl-games (*stappoo*, *hopscotch* etc.) or activity centres for girls seems not to have been considered. As all these schools are located in rural settings, there are open spaces in and around the school. Girls expressed a general feeling of insecurity in playing outdoors because of a lack of boundary walls. Such admissions from the female children, particularly since some of these schools are located in rural areas where their vulnerability cannot be underscored enough.

93. For the holistic development of children, particularly in residential schools as those under reference, it is essential for them to have opportunities to expend their energies constructively as well as to have some form of entertainment, be it through sportsmanship; which is perceived to be a quality inherent especially in tribal children. Any impetus to their natural talents as well as further honing of their extra-curricular skills is bound to help the development of a child, particularly one who may lose a lot of confidence through non/ weak performance in academics.

94. In addition to the investigators thoroughly conducting an assessment of the 13 schools under reference, the study team carried out in-depth study of 5 schools \_ 2 SC boys', 2 SC girls' and 1 ST boys' \_ by physically attending these schools, at least two of them being located in extremely remote and nuxal-affected locations. The following cases have been generated from 2 of the select 5 schools; detailed photographic profiles of which also have been developed. The following two cases aid validation of poor status of the schools' infrastructural profiles and the next 50 odd paragraphs indeed are representative description of nuances of schooling under the program.

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#### Observations on **Badagaon's** ST residential school, Dist. Kaimur : **Case - 1**

94. For a school established in 1956, Badagaon's SC/ ST residential school has not changed much, be it in terms of basic facilities or in quality. In fact, it has possibly

deteriorated in the latter. Students still do not have toilets, they continue to use the nearby forest to relieve themselves and two hand pumps to bathe and wash out in the open irrespective of weather conditions. Not bathing is seen as being 'unclean' and 'un-student-like'. Considering the ages of children being admitted, (class I up to class X) the very infrastructure of the school is hostile to any conducive growth of its inmates who are tribal boys from nearby districts.

***Critical question** here is whether or not the school is able to deliver and manifest on ground the state-perceived empowering services aimed for STs, who are learnt to be a longstanding case of acute marginalization in the state. Considering that the school is dominated by more than 80% of children from local communities; the most backward **Khairwar** tribe; a sense of deprivation possibly is increasingly deepening with rather insensitive functioning of the school!*

**95.** Even access to the school which is located some two hours from the nearest block headquarters is intimidating for most children and parents. An expensive and testing journey up a hilly terrain and then through a rather thick forest, which lacks even a motorable road despite having a residential school for over fifty years! The travelling conditions, particularly in monsoon and harsh winters are so severe that it is frightening to consider the course to be taken in case of any emergency or threat to the young boys. Medical facilities continue to be the ways of the forest, superstitious perhaps by a sheer lack of options, these children even in the case of snakebites have to visit the local witch doctor to be cured. Teachers complain about the long process of having a hundred rupee medical slip cut by the Government doctors who often do not even visit the nearest PHC.

**96.** The study feels that the school seemingly is not destitute-friendly. Most of the enrolled children are either second or third generation literates with parents or elder brothers/ relatives having studied in the same or other such residential schools. The process of applying to such a school and then following up on the exam, results and other requirements such as certificates etc requires access to critical of information, time and guidance; something a truly vulnerable and destitute SC/ ST parent or child is incapable of understanding in the first go. Parents of most of the children generally have government jobs or migrate to other states for work. Proportion of first generation enrolment into the school was reported to be very low.

**97.** Divided into little buildings, each doubling as a classroom by day and living/ sleeping quarter by night, the school lacks everything that could possibly qualify it as being a school. There is no definite timetable, nobody rings the school bell since the gong was lost or as alleged, stolen, there are still no desks and chairs except a few for the senior boys in their rooms, there are two blackboards in the school but nobody knows where the chalks and dusters are. Most classes are held out in the open and some inside the dark dingy rooms,

where children sit on broken floors and teachers, on beds conducting Hindi, Mathematics and Sanskrit lessons. And sometimes, if there is still a little diesel left for the generator - a computer class.

**98.** The computer teacher has been deputed for a period of three months in an academic year. Children, particularly the senior students have learnt or seen how to use the 'paint tool' on the computer. They don't know how to type yet and some aren't even sure if there actually is a computer on their campus! Teachers quietly explain that this being a remote school in a forest, they can't take chances with expensive machines like computers which can be easily stolen or destroyed by their students or others, just like the solar lights were.

**99.** These classes if held are usually combined. Senior boys take the responsibility of teaching juniors when they feel like it or are ordered to by teachers. Materials such as notebooks, stationery and other course related books do not reach children in time. They are also stored in cartons in the senior boys' rooms.

**100.** There is a distinct difference in the rooms of senior and junior boys. While the latter live in rooms with fewer beds and blankets in proportion to their numbers, often without windows and doors, no mosquito nets, broken floors and extremely dirty surroundings in general, the seniors enjoy neater rooms with beds, desks (no chairs), lanterns and almost workable shutting windows something which just about keeps the cold out. The rooms are decorated with painted images of the goddess *Saraswati* and *Hanuman*, ostensibly painted flying over the single blackboard in the room.

**101.** Children are extremely conscientious about their morning and evening prayers; they have also rigged up a *pandal* made by chopping wood from the nearby forest for a weeklong *Saraswati pooja* celebration. Seniors have collected little donations ranging between rupees 35-50 for arranging a feast for the local pundits on the occasion. This *sanskritization* of classrooms, living spaces and even student's attitudes so much so as to equate cultural vibrance/ activities with religious fervour was a predominant element observed amongst students on campus. The children report, a recent visit to Varanasi for all the students was also organized by the school, students are encouraged to pray twice a day and maintain their little shrines/ photographs/ prayer spots in their rooms. While this may not be a local practice, the rather obvious emphasis on the same by teachers and older students was somewhat pronounced.

**102.** Children drawing figures on walls including the kitchen's soot covered wall were all perceived as desperate attempts to express themselves creatively. No charts/ colours or



creative materials were available to the children to decorate their living spaces. Teachers seemed least interested in encouraging such pursuits anyway.

**103.** Even their role models were observed to be slightly old-timely, be it Bhagat Singh or Indira Gandhi (not considering the heroes of contemporary India) and even their favourite film actors and actresses were of the early '80s and '90s. While teachers enjoy the luxury of reading the occasional newspaper, students do not know why the school has no subscription/ access to magazines. There is no library despite the ample time and hungry inclination the children have towards learning, the study team could clearly notice. The children's obsession with praying is possibly due to a lack of any other more constructive activity.

**104.** The quality of the food served (*twice a day*) to the children at irregular timings was atrocious as were the conditions in which the food is cooked by a lone daily wage earning villager hired by the NGO contracted for the job. Utensils, including the children's plates and cooking pots are washed with mud and sand. Children often waste huge quantities of food due to the sheer tastelessness of the poorly cooked meal. Teachers praised before the study team the children's own prowess at cooking the local litti-chokha, something they reportedly enjoy having every now and then. The teachers own cooking and cleaning is done by a school peon who no longer visits the 'school campus' but sticks around the teachers' quarters to do odd jobs such as making tea and cleaning the teachers' toilets. Some students also help around the teachers' living quarters.

**105.** Drinking water quality is injurious to the health of students, most of whom suffer from chronic stomach aches due to the strong mineral content and deposits in the water. It was disturbing to note how teachers are least concerned about whether the water being consumed by children is at least boiled if not filtered. The general apathy of teachers regarding the living conditions of students was evident in interactions with them.

**106.** Sports facilities — students demand and create opportunities for play. The school team has won cricket and kabaddi matches, something the Headmaster is not openly proud about : the study team gathered so while speaking to him. The ownership and pride that would be expected to emanate from the school staff is grossly lacking in the behaviour and profiles of teachers. They do not play with or supervise the games of the children. The junior children have made their own wooden stumps to play cricket, as sports facilities such as the playing ground and access to helmets, bat and balls seem to be dominated by seniors. The school being exclusively for tribal boys, their prowess in playing sports is an inherent talent which the school staff are not too keen or aware to hone any further.

**107.** There is a gross lack of constructive reading/ listening/ watching (audio-visual) materials for children to use and benefit from during free time, which is ample in the school. No specific prep or study hours for the students either. Teachers do not help in school or home work; senior students generally take the responsibility of teaching juniors as there is a glaring lack of teachers on campus. For 10 classes, only 3-4 teachers are available. There are no co-curricular/sports teachers and no specific residential school related roles have been assigned to teachers.

**108.** The visit to the school, discussion with few visiting parents revealed that new children/ admissions are not provided any orientation with school facilities neither are introduced to other students. The study feels, there is serious lack of a support system for young children or new admissions who have left their families/ homes to come and study in a new environment. Students themselves are hostile towards new admissions due to the lack of interest and responsibility amongst teachers who do not even meet guardians or interact with/ orient them before they leave their wards in the school. There is no provision for lanterns or extra blankets for students who may not have brought any from home.

**109.** Junior students are particularly vulnerable. The vulnerability of younger students in the general atmosphere of the school cannot be underscored enough. Not only are they threatened by the obviously more empowered and bold older students, they also face the threat of being unacquainted with the curriculum/ syllabus of the school on leaving their previous village schools. Teachers take no particular interest in helping them with extra classes or providing any support whatsoever, be it academic or emotional.

**110.** The sheer desolateness of the school campus, lacking in contemporary knowledge, ideas and even energy to create and avail opportunities is lacking and there is a general lethargy, a poverty of ideas and powerlessness amongst the students and teachers which is unhealthy. It is almost as if each inmate is bidding time for some great eventuality, be it the construction of a new dormitory or an opportunity to participate in some event.

**111.** While the infrastructure of the school is inadequate and shoddily maintained, the new building which is expected to come up soon has suspended construction work. There is purposelessness and careless attitude in the staff who does not even consider making the effort to demand basic facilities for students let alone complaining about the time the construction is taking. Teachers however are quick to request for a payment for an individual contractor who served the school cricket team food on two occasions.

**112.** Children are aware of facilities in nearby residential schools and interact with their students whenever they can. They consider having an English teacher and good living quarters to be the measuring stick for the quality of a residential school.

**113.** There is also a conspicuous lack of communication between the teachers and senior students on future prospects, as teachers themselves seem unaware of opportunities and possibilities available post completing high school in the residential school.

**114.** Even imagining positive growth in terms of academic knowledge for these children living in such conditions is impossible. To be facing such gruesome, hard conditions to educate one's self is equally an act of sheer bravery as it is of sheer helplessness. The school seemed nothing less than a dumping ground despite possibly being the oldest residential school in the state.

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Observations on **Kudra's** SC residential school, Dist. Kaimur : **Case - 2**

**Facilities, infrastructure (hostel, classroom specific), food, inter-student relationships and dynamics, children, children as students, residentiality of school**

**115.** A school with freezing and appalling conditions for any child to possibly live in, let alone apply his mind to the study and pursuit of a course that may ensure his holistic growth. While dormitory rooms have windows, each and every one of the glass panes is broken. To cover up for the incoming draught the boys have used torn sackcloth and plastic, most of which are in such bad condition that old notebooks have been fixed in place of windowpanes. In addition to living in the freezing cold, children also brave the stench and flooded conditions of toilets which overflow into their corridors. The three cleaning staff hired for keeping the school clean have never been seen by the children, who taking matters into their own hands have a "Safaai Mantri" (Cleanliness Minister) a student chosen from amongst themselves to shoulder all responsibilities related to campus cleanliness. However, the child minister is unable to do much since there isn't even a bottle of phenyl to clean toilets with.

**116.** Children eat their meals sitting on the floor; often they are served their dal from a plastic bathing mug while they sit crouched waiting. The younger ones take meals to the older ones before they eat their own and since the timings for food are uncertain, they wait till the NGO staff arrive and start up the single mud chullah in the dining room. The cook cuts vegetables in a room which also serves as a store for old brooms and ash and cow dung

cakes. His chopping knives remain unwashed for every meal but his pots are almost always clean. Students look forward to their once a month treat of eggs.

**117.** Classrooms are cleaner than the hostel rooms, primarily because they aren't used. The benches and tables are so uncomfortable that children prefer to study sitting on the floor. Most enjoy studying computers, from far though since the teacher fears they may dirty the keyboard but the seniors get their way and know how to make new files, folders and paint the occasional bitmap image. They don't know how to type but can recall having seen the computer and at some point, used it.

**118.** Children are aware of the facilities in a nearby school such as a laboratory and a 'proper' playground, both of which they lack. They prefer admitting to lacking sports facilities and science labs than suggesting an improvement to their living conditions, this in itself is heart wrenching if not surprising. While their playground is adjacent to a filthy pond, the local livestock particularly pigs and goats throng the area instead. An old volleyball net has been kept away safely as a priceless possession only to be taken out on sunny days. Senior boys visit the nearby stadium for a game of barefoot football while juniors watch from the rooftop of their school building. The two solar lights on this roof are also dysfunctional.

**119.** Entertainment in the form of television has been suspended for a while, but TV viewing is a once a month affair anyway. The students are most proud of their 'Julooss' (procession) on Saraswati pooja with they take out every year.

**120.** Most students are second generation learners, their brothers or cousins have already studied in similar residential schools. They usually fill in their own forms for consecutive years once admissions are through. The school notice board has pieces of paper with announcements hastily scribbled onto them glued onto it; most children cannot even reach up to read these messages and announcements. Missing an important submission deadline or forgetting to attach a picture/ certificate can result in cancellation of admission.

**121.** While senior students do not teach in the classrooms, juniors often approach brothers or cousins in senior classes to help them with lessons in the hostel. There is no timetable or dedicated study hour/ plan; children do just as they please including eating meals at odd hours and leaving the campus without prior information to senior teachers etc.

**122.** An election process has been constituted by the students to suggest names by popular oral vote for various positions such as 'Pradhan Mantri' (Head Boy). These elections are a monthly affair and most heads aren't keen to hold responsibilities but the rule being

once their name is suggested they must comply, these boys are forced to undertake administrative functions on the campus irrespective of their personal willingness. One may believe this is due to the lack of administrative support for running a residential school.

**123.** The school lacks a library and indoor sports facilities for days when students are cooped up in their rooms. It is frightening to note exactly how many hours the boys spend loitering about aimlessly; unsupervised and uninspired.

**124.** Parents and guardians visit their wards at will and often eat at the school pantry; this affects the general rationing and serves more as an excuse for lesser food in general.

**125.** While there is no dedicated visiting physician for the boys, none of the teachers are trained paramedics and there is no vehicle in case of an emergency although the school is located on the main road.

**126.** The element of residentiality of the school is grossly ignored and non-existent to the point where beyond academics, there is no real life for the students who need to expend their energies constructively be it in reading, writing, drawing, singing, dancing, theatre or sports etc. none of these extra or even co-curricular activities feature the daily lives of the borders. It is not surprising that they wander to the nearby market in search of entertainment and company. Nor is there any support for counseling the teenage boys on various aspects of their future opportunities even in terms of personal relationships, let alone career guidance.

**Teachers, teaching, teacher-student relationship, teacher-children, teacher-teacher, roles, activities, beliefs, expectations, needs, sensitivity, understanding**

**127.** Teachers feel threatened by the local boys who as per their claims intimidate them through political clout and their sheer strength. This vulnerability may have underlying causes such as caste equations between teachers and students as well as the weight and severity of the students own legacy.

**128.** On probing staff members who have been posted earlier to the school, the reasons for sharply dwindling results including the steep decline in first division students over a period of time was assessed. Reasons for an excellent result between 1992 and 1994 (peak period) included a dedicated set of 7 teachers of which 5 were regulars based in the residential school and 2 were on deputation. This was the period when intermediate classes were introduced and the overall atmosphere in the school was one which was conducive to

academic growth and opportunity, this is believed to have affected the boys' attitude towards their studies. Overall however, it is believed that as good team of teachers went a long way in establishing such an atmosphere and sustaining student interest as well as in enforcing rules and regulations for disciplined study and behaviour.

**129.** Teachers hesitate to share their personal views, likes and dislikes even amongst themselves. They are constantly on guard and in favour of being posted out of the school. Their personal views are limited to the lack of teachers and the indiscipline of students not their own roles and possible contributions. Overall, a negative but highly qualified team which is rich in qualifications and experience yet in no way relates to the communities the children come from.

**130.** The staff is an inaccessible community within the school as they choose to keep interactions with students fiercely to the point. Teachers live in separate quarters sometimes off the campus; out of class engagements and interactions with students are extremely rare and limited. Their posture always demanding a certain distance and respect, the teachers try to consciously stay aloof sometimes perhaps for their own security as suggested by some posted in boys residential schools. Parents also mentioned not being allowed inside the campus to meet teachers.

**131.** The teachers' idea of great schooling begins with brilliant students, a feature they do not relate with the children in their school with a few exceptions. They do not perceive their own inputs and teaching to be the primary investment and effort behind improving the quality of students, it was noted through interviews with parents and guardians that most students take tuition from tutors close to the residential schools. The teachers do not perceive the basic social and economic background of the students as deserving of extra attention or as being a reason for inherent academic weaknesses in children.

**132.** Inter-teacher dynamics are rather phony and formal for a residential school which requires close to twenty-four hour interaction. Relationship between teacher and Principal is further complicated by the fact that the Principal belongs to a different state (UP). A staff member who has been posted to the school previously takes the lead in most spheres, including interaction with students.

**133.** Student-teacher relationships are equally strained and while students make an effort to approach teachers and perhaps even look up towards them, the teachers remain aloof and distant. The children possibly yearn for a softer side and warmer interpersonal communication and activities to foster the same.

**134.** Teachers obviously do not perceive their role beyond that of academic inputs and general monitoring. Mentoring, support and general role of a guardian is absolutely sidelined by the larger pride they have accumulated over the teaching of such backward students for so many years.

**135.** The primary and overwhelming sentiment emanating from teachers is that of their perceived self importance and superior teaching abilities on account of them surviving under such hostile conditions and the patience required to teach such children.

**136.** A general consensus on the need for refresher courses was agreed upon, however the teachers expressed a desire to learn computers without actually iterating whether it would help them teach better/ administer smoother in school. It seemed a more personal learning experience and bonus.

**137.** Teachers agreed to an existing pattern in the admission process, which is too complex for a poor SC parent to understand and pursue. They felt the entire system was poor and uneducated unfriendly, only those students who have a relative/ friend etc studying in a residential school can actually understand the application procedure.

**138.** The transferring of local senior boys to faraway or neighbouring districts was suggested by teachers to improve the overall discipline in the school so that teachers are not threatened by local connects.

**139.** A lack of staff was also considered as being one of the main reasons for the poor performance of the school and its students on all fronts. As intermediate classes were also suspended due to lack of teachers and facilities, the staff suggested increasing the number of teachers.

**140.** No particular mention or understanding of the vibrance and use of TLMs, friendly classroom transactions or even co-curricular activities was made by the teachers. The lack of basic facilities and even general student welfare were not emphasised or underscored by the teachers, instead their personal woes of either student politics or lack of resources for teachers themselves were far more important subjects for discussion.

**141.** An even remote understanding or sensitivity towards the community the children come from and the specific needs of a residential school were not observed in the teaching staff of the school. To them, the school was perhaps another day school where students

happen to live by themselves. After school hours/ activities/ support or any such were not of any concern to the staff in general, even to the Principal who kept a safe distance from the hostel at all times.

**SC boys specific - lack of role models, support, guidance, sensitivity, understanding, needs**

**142.** The needs of these students being particularly special on account of their socio-economic and even cultural background, it is disturbing to note that there are no special measures taken by the staff of these residential schools to enrich the lives of the children who spend most of their academic years cooped up in dingy rooms staring at posters of Gods and Goddesses on whom they depend earnestly, to pass each exam by a mere whisker.

**143.** Extra classes for personal development, oratory skills etc are not even discussed let alone taken. The sheer lack of orientation and sensitisation amongst teachers in caring for and understanding the specific needs of these children is not catered for in any of the trainings they have undergone.

**144.** There is a gross lack of positive activities, messages and communication to and amongst the students to encourage their growth beyond the paradigms their castes have set all these years.



**ToR – 3 :** *The level and quality of community awareness/ involvement/ perception about these schools including their involvement in managing these schools and their perception about the schools like- its importance, credibility, quality of education, reputation etc. This would also involve few Interviews with drop-out children and their parents to understand the reasons for drop out.*

#### **Highlights -**

- *Parents were critical about the quality of most basic facilities in schools such as food, water and living arrangements.*
- *Only some of those could articulate quality of education and future of their children who had either studied in these schools themselves or their elder children had passed out from the same school.*
- *Distinctly, the study consistently observed that SC boys focused more on facilities while ST boys on academics. This is albeit something that may not be suggested as empirical.*
- *A number of girls especially those from higher classes and seemed surer of what they want to suggest, took firm stand around issues of improved living condition, privacy and of security & safety.*
- *Most children were ‘dropped out’ by the school and teachers; it rarely was a choice exercised by the parents or by the children or under a pressing condition.*
- *Most children on dropping out of school had become migrant laborers. These were generally the poorest and most vulnerable children in the school and also, first generation learners.*

## Views of the enrolled children

### A compilation of focused group discussions with enrolled children in SC ST residential schools in Bihar

**145.** FGDs were largely carried out with children from higher classes – in most of the schools children from class IX and X participating in the discussion. In some schools, even class sixth and above students took part in these discussions. The investigators were directed that they should not selectively pick children of their choice/ preference for FGD, instead should allow spontaneous participation based on willingness of the children concerned. Also, they were directed to not be very stringent on the number of children participating in FGDs; the group turning out to be very big or relatively small.

### Nature of participation of the children in FGDs

**146** FGDs suggest interesting pattern of children's participation. FGDs conducted with enrolled children in all 13 schools carefully documented extent of children (a) left the discussion halfway (considering either being indifferent or overly sensitive to the content of the discussion), (b) who spoke freely, fearlessly, or may be even out of desperation, (c) took firm stand, reiterated their points, insisted upon certain issues and (d) remained quite suggesting agreement/ consent or by virtue of their introvert nature/ lacking skills, confidence to speak up in a forum.

**146.** It was analysed that children from different classes \_ *a mixed non-cohesive group* \_ all seem to attend the full discussion session and not leave the discussion halfway if the discussion was connecting interest of all. On the other hand, FGDs having children even from one class, they seem to be leaving the discussion halfway; however, in sporadic cases, the discussion not being able to connect interest of all. In almost all cases children came in large groups (may be by virtue of enthusiasm, curiosity or as an attempt to overcome low level of confidence); not many of them speaking freely; many indeed preferring to keep quiet.

**147.** *Pattern emerging from the girls' FGDs* - - all girls spoke freely in all FGDs having participated in mixed group (from different classes). Surprisingly, a good number of girls took firm stand on certain issues and remained quiet only when participation in a group was not possible due to paucity of time. Girls from higher classes seemed surer of what they want to suggest and in taking firm stance on certain issues. Laying more focus on necessity of improved living condition, privacy and security related issues; girls were more appreciative of their teachers than boys (attributed to *father-like behaviour?*) Even teachers reciprocate the sense for girls!

**148.** Interesting pattern was observed with the FGDs with SC children also. These suggested that children with SC community did not leave any discussion halfway; however, they were not speaking freely either. In sporadic cases, it seemed a low percentage of children took firm position on social issues that featured during the discussion. SC girls and boys made a more critical assessment of the school conditions, candidly criticizing roles in school administration and status of facilities.

**149.** Tribal children were found to be rather sluggish in their response, did not seem to remain silent though not by intent. Majority of the children remained quiet, very few taking firm stand on any issue. General observation suggests, tribal children brought more academic issues against those raised by the SC children on school facilities.

Finer aspects emerged in the FGDs : **Likes & dislikes**

**150.** The children articulated unique aspects while probing their likes and dislikes. Interestingly, it was observed that there is distinctness in the specific likes and dislikes of SC Girls and SC Boys and of ST boys. The study learnt that the Girls tend to feel insecure due to lack of boundary walls, lightening, separate bathing facilities and lack of grills on windows. These make them feel vulnerable while playing outdoors and in general living. The lack of female wardens in hostels is also a cause of concern for a majority of girls who also tend to find filthy living conditions more oppressive when compared to boys.

**151.** The boys enlisted in the FGDs a number of dislikes - - such as encroachments on school property, inadequate number of subject specific teachers, undeveloped and unequipped playground, fighting in hostels and bad quality as well as shortage of food etc. As far as likings, children of both genders and social group generally enjoy participative activities and opportunities for self expression particularly Balsabhas, reading, singing, playing, crafts, gardening, and other such activities. Although, they reported that they do not get to pursue such activities of their likings often in respective schools. Other complaints by students included having no telephone facilities in case of an emergency, an un-updated school Notice Board, lack of essential living articles such as blankets and desks. The children also dislike not receiving their meals on time.

#### **Observations validated \_ notes taken by the consultants & investigators**

**152.** *Study team's visits to several schools under reference further accentuated the above facts related to the specific likes and dislikes of children. The team observed that the most of*

*the children's dislikes are indeed their helplessness in the control of quality and amount of food dispensed/ served as they feel they cannot directly complain to anyone about the same. The overwhelming desire of students to participate in more "fun" and entertaining as well as learning activities was most palpable in informal discussions with them. The study could clearly sense that the children yearn for opportunities to exhibit their worth, their talents and seek to hone them further. Young girls are conscious of privacy and factors such as sitting on the floor while wearing skirts, their insecurity and discomfort is obvious.*

Other finer aspects emerged in the FGDs : **Favourite subject**

**153.** Candidly articulated, overall, the students generally prefer Hindi, Science and Mathematics. While, some children expressed an interest in English, it indeed was not their favorite subject. Most schools did not have a library or subscription to a regular newspaper, children expressed a liking for books beyond their curriculum these included general knowledge books and magazines, comics and novels. Specific literature having appreciation for dalits and marginalized communities in India was not observed as to be popular as the study of Ramayana, something students were candid about. The question on dalits' history, the study team feels indeed was premature given age and level of understanding of the children.

**Relevant observations validated \_ onsite assessments made by the study team/ investigators**

**154.** As per onsite assessment by the study teams, English being a subject that most students are weak in, the reason for possible dislike of the same may stem from a lack of competent teaching. The subjects of preference also reflect the relevant teaching staff's competencies and interests, particularly in the case of remote schools such as Badagaon, where English teachers are unavailable. Students themselves have equated good quality residential schools as being ones with English teachers. Surprisingly, in informal discussions children did not mention computers as a favorite subject.

More finer aspects emerged : **Leisure-time engagement & punishments**

**155.** The students suggested that their leisure activities primarily include evening prayers, cleaning of campus, reading and occasionally outdoor games. The various punishments meted out to the children include caning, beating, throwing dusters at children, pulling ears, making them to run in scorching heat etc. each of which are considered humiliating by children. Reasons for punishment include not completing home-work asking for clarifications

from teacher for more than twice, lack of cleanliness in the hostel rooms, indiscipline and any other violation of rules.

### **Facts validated \_ site-based observations by the consultants & investigators**

**156.** When spoken to them, students clearly responded more to 'punishments' than to 'leisure' activities. Most considered cleaning the campus and their own hostel rooms, including washing their clothes to be leisure activities.

#### Children's own assessment about teachers - -

**157.** The FGDs recorded, in all schools the most popular teacher is usually one who fulfills the roles of mentor, friend and has general excellence in technical or subject base knowledge particularly in English or Mathematics. Popular teachers also make children feel at home particularly if they are new admissions, these teachers also spend more non-academic time with students be it playing in sports or other extra-curricular, albeit very few in numbers. SC/ ST teachers do not find any special favour amongst children who do admit to such teachers generally being more sensitive.

#### Children's take on co- & extra-curricular activities

**158.** The investigators registered in their FGD reports that no school has a dedicated teacher for such activities all cultural programmes are organized by students themselves the most prevalent being the Sarswati puja, and observing the National Days (Republic and Independence Day). Teachers generally do not supervise or participate in sports or games. The lack of guidance for creative pursuits such as painting, clay-making, other crafts and activities is missed by the students who find Bal-sabhas the best occasion to interact and express themselves.

#### Children's perception on their role in **School management**

**159.** The FGDs did reveal that there is a formation of school council (namely Bal-sabha), comprising students who are elected for specific responsibilities related to cleanliness, health, Sports and Music etc. in almost every school. These child ministers execute school management responsibilities such as keeping the campus clean and administering medicines to sick students. Other formal duties may include ringing the school bell, mobilizing other students for cleaning, gardening, and arranging rations.

## Children appraising their **future & career perspective, social implication & peer-group influence**

**160.** During the FGDs, children in most schools could not provide clear answer or articulation of their aspirations. As they articulated, most of them preferred jobs included Police, Doctors, Engineers, Teachers, and in some stray cases Nurse and BSF. Students also admitted to a lack of information on the same while some considered admission into good government school the next step.

**161.** Also, majority of students could not answer the question but SC Girls in some cases expressed how their peer group tried to negatively influence their parent's decision to enroll their daughters in residential schools. According to the girls this was meant to stop them from advancing ahead. Other SC girls mentioned jealousy and pulling down by peer group and other villagers as the general reaction to their being admitted to residential schools. ST boys in two select schools felt that due to a lack of educated people in their village, one can neither stand against their admissions nor even check/ care about their studies in these residential schools. However, these boys noticed a perceptible change in the respect they now receive in their villages.

## Perception of the parents of the enrolled children

### General perception about schools, satisfaction levels and changes observed in their wards

**162.** The FGDs register as the first reactions of parents on being asked about their **views on the residential schools** their children studied in were never related to the quality of the school, teaching dispensed or even the general welfare (or sheer lack of it!) of their children. Reactions were predominantly 'the school is good for us poor people', 'it is fine for our kind' and even 'being who we are, we can't get better'. These defeatist opinions and views were shared even by educated or well employed parents. Parents also went to the extent of saying the school isn't for poor or 'un-connected and ignorant' people since the admission process is 'intimidating' and long, of these parents a few even complained of having to pay to have their children admitted to the school.

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: Nandu Ram , Father of Anil Ram, Class 8<sup>th</sup>,  
Chautarwa, West Champaran

**163.** Many parents, particularly those of SC girls and ST boys were noted to be aware of the current Government's efforts to educate their children through these schools. Some even referred to the Chief Minister's visit their child's school and the ensuing improvement in it, although it was short-lived. However, a majority of the parents were vocally thankful for the Government's concerted endeavour in making these residential schools, no matter how bad their status maybe.

**164.** An overwhelming majority of parents were observed to be dissatisfied with the overall quality of education. Some even rated it as either having deteriorated or as being the same since their elder children had studied in the schools previously. Others were uncomfortable answering the question on account of being illiterate themselves, particularly mothers and labourer fathers who felt their child could answer the question better or sometimes suggested that the child says it's all right. These parents also expressed that while the children said there were 'no studies' in school, the parents felt at peace because at least the child was enrolled in a school, getting two square meals a day instead of loitering about the village. Some parents even went so far as to say that the school seems to be meant for eating and sleeping as there are no teachers to teach! Certain parents became defensive on being questioned about the quality, saying it was obviously good enough since their children were all enrolled in it.

### **Thoughts on their children's future**

**165.** Based on hearsay and on observing how pass outs from the better schools fared in terms of employment, the parents felt their children would have brighter futures or even matriculation degrees and that was enough. Some suggested and hoped that these schools would be developed to being intermediate or BA level so the children could possibly continue their studies further.

**166.** Most parents observed what they considered to be positive changes in their children, these included a great inclination towards praying, staying clean with timely baths, washing and encouraging (often angrily) their siblings and even parents to maintain cleanliness. While most SC boys parents concluded that their sons no longer abused or used vulgar language, tribal parents were happy their sons could speak clear Hindi and respected their elders and were respected in their villages. SC girls' parents, particularly mothers were upset that their daughters had become too talkative and answered back, but were happy that their daughters woke up on time and seemed more disciplined in general. Disturbingly, many

parents also noticed that their children had become loners, more irritable, did not meet guests and were short tempered with their siblings; signs perhaps of frustration.

**167.** All parents had dreams of government jobs for their sons, some wanted their daughters to become teachers or ANMs while others were keen to get their daughters married. Parents were however vocal about giving their children the freedom to decide what career they may pursue, as long as it was not backbreaking laborious work like their fathers. Mothers in general were keen that their sons pursue something technical that will render them immediately useful, they were not keen about further studies like fathers were.

### Observation on teacher's behaviour - - what do the children appraise about teachers

**168.** While boys' parents were generally satisfied with the teacher's behaviour towards their children and felt the teacher-student relationship is generally amicable except teachers are negligent about teaching their children, this too was said guardedly and blamed on the lack of teachers rather than on teachers themselves. Girls' parents were more critical of the teacher-student relationship, some went to the extent of saying the 'father daughter' relationship expected between the teacher and student did not exist, while female teachers were unduly strict. Poorer parents, were reverent towards the teacher-student relationship and expressed 'obvious' satisfaction.

**169.** In some cases, where the enrolled child's older brothers who may have previously been enrolled in the school almost always expressed dissatisfaction with the teachers. Adding that without coaching, their siblings couldn't possibly do well.

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: Sh. Yogendra Ram, father of Munna Kumar,  
Class 6<sup>th</sup>, ramchak, Dist. Saran

**170.** Parents who were comparatively better informed and 'well off' did not hesitate to name teachers their children were dissatisfied with. Parents of SC girls were particularly critical of some teachers who were not sensitive to their children. Some parents felt the higher caste teachers were uninterested in teaching their lower caste children just so they wouldn't go 'forward'. However other parents, particularly STs felt that despite their children being lower castes 'at least the teachers taught them' and were sometimes amicable towards their children.

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: Smt. Ramawati, Mother of Ravi Ranjan  
Kumar, Class 5<sup>th</sup>, Dist, Patna



171. The parents overall, said their children and they themselves appreciated teachers who allowed the children to use their mobiles to sometimes talk at home or teachers who quick in responding to medical emergencies and hospital care. Girls however seemed to share more about their school life and teachers with their parents than the boys.

172. In the case of SC and ST boys, favourite teachers were those who 'taught them good thoughts'. Interestingly, these were generally Sanskrit teachers.

### Improvements sought in schools - - thoughts on managing school affairs

173. Most parents did not visit the schools regularly. They had never interacted with teachers or even the headmaster except when some had to 'pay' for admission and help in the form filling and submission process. Illiterate and labour class 'first time admission' parents were more uncertain about the exact facilities and quality to be expected from the school and were hence less critical, instead the visited schools only to check on their child's health and food which were always unsatisfactory, they did not have any opinion on the education since they just followed what their child said as being right as far as education was concerned. However, 'second or multiple time admission' parents who were more exposed to the functioning and utilities available in these schools found fault in everything from the lack of classrooms, toilets, teachers, hostel facilities and food which was never served according to the prescribed table and never of healthy or proper quality.

174. Apart from these, every parent was worried about their child's security, particularly in the case of girls who even slept alone and in some schools had to bathe outdoors. Mothers feared most that their girls would loiter about in the market or be sent to buy food and other sundries for their teachers. Boys parents also expressed similar concerns about boys wasting time since teachers were too few or uninterested, the proximity of schools to marketplaces was also seen as being an impediment to the children's overall inclination towards studying.

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: Renu Devi, Mother of Priyanka Kumari,  
Class 8<sup>th</sup>, Dist, Patna

175. The gross lack of medical services and the irrevocably dilapidated buildings where their children lived and studied scared their parents to no end, especially the pits present on campuses or even 3300 V electric wires that ran through the campus. The parents knew that children remain unattended by day and night; this was most disturbing as well since parents saw residential schools as being model disciplining centres.

**176.** Parents were also outspoken about teachers never being accessible and often allowing parents only to come till the school gate to meet children. And parents who were aware of the importance of parent-teacher meetings felt this inapproachability needed to be removed in order to ensure that teachers were more accountable for their children's welfare.

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: MohanPaswan, father of Dhananjai Paswan,  
Class 8<sup>th</sup>, Kudra, Dist. Kaimur

**177.** No parent, even uneducated parents found the teaching to be appropriate for the contemporary world. Those who's children had studied in the schools previously found no change in the status and studies of the school or expressed further deterioration. In case the family had older siblings present at the time of the interview, the siblings openly said that the schools did not have functional libraries or any source of 'general knowledge' for children.

**178.** Parents also felt that without the extra tuition they get during holidays, their children would be unable to pass in their final exams.

**179.** Few parents were candid about extra information related to the school all though every parent complained about problems with the quality of food or sometimes even the lack of it, driving children to go on hunger strikes and demand money from home for things like medicines, copies and donations for events such as 'saraswati pooja'. Parents were worried about the security of their children during the night time, with no teachers staying back in the hostel.

**180.** The lack of glass window panes, broken leaking roofs, the sheer lack of toilets their ruinous conditions, children having to share single beds with three-four other children, lack of supplies such as uniforms, sheets, blankets, books and stationery in junior students as well as all schools not serving wheat 'roti' and just rice twice a day were concerns. But the biggest concern for every parent was medical aid; some complained about children having severely suffered to lack of timely medical attention, others felt school authorities were wrong in expecting parents to solely take care of their wards medical conditions since parents could not always arrive in time. Some even mentioned their young daughters being sent back home with two other female students as escorts, in the case of appendicitis!

**181.** Illiterate parents or those who were labourers and migrant workers blatantly expressed that they had no idea, others said there were no real changes or applications

unless if their inclination towards studying, cleanliness and orderliness was taken into account. Most parents however could not answer the question.

**182.** Children who studied in residential schools were expected to be “better” on account of having the sole responsibility of studying and no household work, this would obviously help them perform better as well as study harder (according to parents/guardians and siblings). Their behaviour was seen as being more refined now that they were no longer living with or loitering about with children from the village, instead these children were in better “society” of only likeminded and studious children in the schools. However, all these were hypothetical expectations on behalf of the parents who themselves admitted that this was not always the case.

### **Perceptions on children bringing Social pride, future career, livelihoods earning - -**

**183.** As far as the effect of studying in these residential schools on their children was concerned, no parent felt a grave difference except in heightened sense and almost obsession with cleanliness, a more disciplined almost ascetic and severe outlook and personality as well as an cavernous inclination towards studying even during holidays at night with a lantern. All these were seen as positive impacts.

**184.** Parents, especially mothers already felt a change people’s perceptions of their social standing on account of children being in residential schools. Their residential education was perceived as being a stepping stone towards and obviously more secure future and possibly, career. Such education was directly equated with an improvement and basically increased status overall. However, some parents expressed that it was all up to the child and his endeavours how far exactly they might take the family’s name. The parents were definitely ambitious and positive about the possibilities now that their child would be educated.

**185.** While almost all parents were aware of the importance of computer education, others stressed on teaching them skills that may help them get jobs and be useful professional. For the sake of their children’s overall development, the parents expressed that their results would be better if they had opportunities to play and indulge in sports.

**186.** More specifically, SC girls’ parents unanimously articulated the need for more co-curricular and girlish activities such as stitching, needlework, painting, dancing and even sports. ST boys’ parents felt the need

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: Ramayan Oraon, father of Awdhesh Oraon,  
Class 8<sup>th</sup>, bagha – II, Dist. East Champaran

to teach their children 'how to talk in functions', the need for public speaking skills was also observed in SC boys parents/ siblings/ guardians responses.

**187.** Some siblings, who were possibly pass-outs from similar or the same school went on to say that their brothers and sisters ought to have NCC as it helps in further education and government jobs. A few parents felt that if children were told or mentored and guided properly as to what avenues they can pursue and why exactly education is important, the children would perform better. The lack of up to date guidance from teachers was also a concern.

**188.** In general, parents did not find the atmosphere of the schools to be conducive for studies due to a sheer lack of teachers, a lack of facilities including timely food, sleeping arrangements, the poor status of school's security and sometimes proximity of marketplaces and other disturbances. Their children's safety, medical needs and food taking only a little precedence over education, these parents felt they had no alternative but to send their children to residential schools, those who did wanted to remove their children if their results and living condition continued to be as dismal.

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### Discussion with parents of dropout children

**189** Parents of the drop out children, reportedly, were more aggressive in expressing their views. The parents could not speak up the specifics or the nuances; however, blatantly brought core issues to the fore.

**Views about the school** (facilities, education, teachers, contemporariness and relevance, atmosphere in school etc.) - - **satisfaction levels**

**189.** Parents overall felt that the schools were good for their children and convenient for the parents. Some parents, who later explicitly complained about the lack of facilities and other discrepancies in the school including the unpalatable behaviour of teachers who were so inaccessible and unapproachable "like magistrates", dangers of lack of timely medical aid etc did not however immediately complain about the schools and their views were almost always appreciative of even the simple existence of the school. A few tribal parents referred to the schools as being those meant for their particular caste, e.g. '*Uraav School*'.

**190.** While most parents felt the education was satisfactory considering how poor they were, they still complained about the lack of teachers. Only in a minuscule two cases did

parents take the drastic step of removing their child from the school on account of unsatisfactory education. This too was based on the advice of more educated peers.

### Teachers' behaviour

**191.** Interestingly, reasons for being satisfied with the education were only the availability of facilities such as free food, stay and books. Reasons for dissatisfaction were the lack of these facilities, lack of first aid which has even caused deaths of children, and in some cases expelling due to the length of medical treatment for a sick child!

**192.** Parents complained that children were threatened with dire consequences by teachers, such as their names being struck off the school list if they complained about quality and timely distribution of food and books.

**193.** The parents also expressed the lack of co-curricular and technical activities with children, who will render them "useful" after school; some parents and guardians spoke about the need for "freedom of thought and expression" in these schools since junior children felt oppressed by their teachers and seniors.

### Improvements sought

**194.** Security was a major concern for parents, not just SC girls but SC and ST boys as well since boys who had dropped out usually ran away from school, in some cases with unidentified men to Delhi and Mumbai to earn money. Parents were unaware about their sons' whereabouts and felt that their children would not have taken the drastic step of running away had the school had proper facilities.

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: Paltan Baitha, Father of Amir Baitha, Class 5<sup>th</sup>,  
Ramchak, Dist. Saran

### Views and aspirations for child (changes in child, relationship between child and teachers)

**195.** Aspirations about the future of their children were greatly reduced now that they saw no job security post being dropped out from the residential schools. While a majority of parents wanted government jobs for their children, the rest had no such "unrealistic" dream for their children anymore. Many felt a sense of guilt and remorse at having their children back home from school, or working as migrant labour to sustain their families.

**196.** The parents overwhelmingly expressed their dissatisfaction with the child-teacher relationship. They felt teachers were insensitive and did not take care of their children when they fell sick and due to medical negligence parents had even lost a child. The extra work teachers make children do, such as buying food from the market, washing and cleaning were all roadblocks in their children getting an education. They expressed how on visits to schools they were never allowed to meet teachers, often left at the gate itself and could not complain or express dissatisfaction to anyone on campus.

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pkfg, A*

: Kameshwar Baitha, father of Sanoj Baitha, (*The Child has migrated to New Delhi for earning livelihood*)

**197.** Parents were always worried about the welfare of younger children who had no older brothers or sisters in the school; most of these parents were from backward regions and lowest castes, they had no previous experience or exposure to these schools. Incidentally, the profile of most dropped out children's parents was the same. Those who took the drastic step of removing their children from the school were generally richer and better informed. They provided private tuition to their children as well.

**198.** Changes in the behaviour of children generally included an improvement in discipline and cleanliness. A tendency to stay aloof and no longer help fathers in work. Girls seemed to be more withdrawn as well. However tribal parents were happy that their boys no longer tended to pick up fights or answer back, they had become more 'civilized' unlike other children in the village. This was also interpreted as sheer reticence by some.

### **Main reasons for dropping out of school, suggestions to avoid the same in the future**

**199.** Primary reasons for children dropping out of school were related to medical causes, children were either not given treatment or even leave for treatment. On returning to school after having recovered, parents found their children's names to have been struck off the lists.

**200.** In the case of girls, parents complained about female teachers putting false accusations on the girls due to which they were expelled. Only a few girls left school on account of marriage, while others left due to indiscipline and teasing in the hostel. Only one girl who had been dropped out of school was enrolled in another highlights the sheer vulnerability of girls once they are dropped out of the school. It is almost never a personal decision. Two respondents were dropped out of the school due to their MESS and hostel being shut down and teachers asking parents to make girls day-scholars, since their village

was far and parents could not send them to school in time, teachers struck their names off the lists.

**201.** Parents felt that the atmosphere in the school which had deteriorated over the years due to fewer teachers and more 'external elements' causing problems in school such as student politics and fighting (violent indiscipline) in the boys hostels.

**202.** Security being a major issue, not only in girls' schools but also boys, parents requested that pits present in the school and high voltage wires be removed so children do not get hurt. However almost all parents requested medical facilities and more teachers on the campus.

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## Interview with dropout children

### Main reasons for dropping out (school/ family related)

**203.** Children primarily dropped out due to the school itself, even in cases where children said they dropped out due to family problems, the actual reason was the school teachers and a lack of medical facilities. While SC girls did not respond openly to reasons why they dropped out, some claimed to be "falsely accused" and implicated by a certain female teacher. Girls also complained about clothes and other items being stolen in the hostel and senior girls teasing or harassing them, possibly due to the lack of a dedicated warden in the hostel. Interestingly, even girls who dropped out due to marriage were young and enrolled in either 5<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> standard. However such cases were few.

**204.** SC and ST boys were hard to interview as most had migrated as labour to Mumbai, Delhi and Punjab either with fellow villagers or with their parents. These boys were not too old, i.e. a majority of the dropouts were from 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> standard. In cases where children had failed to pass their exams, they had been "dropped out" by the school. A majority of dropout boys failed in exams and found that their names were consequently struck of the school list. All these boys have become migrant labourers as their parents cannot afford a private or even government school.

**205.** Children who fell ill were denied leave despite providing medical certificates and teachers heartlessly told them 'not to show their faces' in school again since their names had been struck of the lists. When children sought medical leave for as little as 10 days, teachers told them to leave school 'forever'. Other older students whose parents back home were ill were denied leave despite giving applications. In the case of a young boy who's brother died

due to medical negligence in the school, the child went back home for his brother's funeral and to recuperate from the shock and on returning to school he was promptly told by a teacher that his name had been struck off as well.

**206.** Teachers have come across as nothing less than tyrants who do not lend a sympathetic ear or provide solace and counsel when children need it most. They deny leaves no matter how serious or severe the reasons are and often, on account of their misjudgment students suffer medical complications and even death.

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: Guddu Kumar Malik, Class 7<sup>th</sup>, Ramnagar,  
Dist. Madhubani

**207.** Only two students left school due to a sheer lack of facilities and bad teaching standards. Such students on being enrolled in private or government schools closer home find the facilities and quality of teaching much superior to their previous school. Alarming, poorer, lowest caste children (*dom*) complained about the casteist attitude of inmates in the school and their reasons for dropping out included being unable to afford notebooks and pencils to study in school. Junior most children who dropped out, particularly boys complained about senior boys making them wash their clothes and being bullied.

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: Swaminath Oraon, Father of Arun Oraon, Class  
5<sup>th</sup>, Sidhawan, Dist. East Champaran

### **Discrimination (gender, social, poverty)**

**208.** While younger children and girls could not articulate on the same, some SC boys were vociferous about the discrimination faced at village and even in school level. On having dropped out of school, the children found their social standing and prospects to be much bleaker now that they would not get jobs or a matriculation certificate.

**209.** Some complained about the attitude of upper caste "people" (implying teachers) in their school, they went to the extent of saying that such prejudices "still exist". Despite the schools being exclusive, the children of the lower castes within SC (often fewer in number) felt excluded and vulnerable. These children did not complain about facilities as much as they did about teachers and fellow students. SC girls were unable to enunciate gender discrimination perhaps due to lack of tact in the case of the interviewers, but they expressed their personal helplessness in attending the school or any other school since their fathers were migrant labourers and older brothers looked after the family back home.



## Need for an interface

**210.** Most children could not gauge the question and perhaps it was not explained too well; however the children apparently need some support system or person between family, studies, teachers and their fellow residential school mates. This vacuum can perhaps be filled by a compassionate and sensitive non teaching staff such as a matron or housemaster/warden.

## Feelings post dropping out of school (*memories*)

**211.** All children seemed to light up at the mention of the possibility of rejoining their schools if only for the sake of their friends whom they left behind. It cannot be denied however that children felt safer in studying (completing an education) in a residential school as opposed to local and private schools. They had awful memories of their schools but missed the company of likeminded, studious children and the security of having “opportunities” in the future. Perhaps being enrolled in a residential school gave them a feeling of being distinguished and special in some way, and in the case of almost all the children the choice to dropout was never their own. Those who chose to dropout did so only due to circumstances created at home such as poverty and parent’s illness and death, for personal medical reasons and most of all due to their teachers and school performance.

## Current status of children and desire to return to school

**212.** Currently, a majority of all dropout children are not enrolled in schools; neither do they seem to have the opportunity of being enrolled due to sheer poverty in their houses. Boys have sought employment as migrant labourers and girls are either married off or looking after siblings due to mothers’ illness and father’s absence. What is most disturbing is the fact that dropout children belong to the poorest within the school, those who cannot afford similar education or private education, a truly upsetting scenario.

## **ToR – 4:** *Comparison of the norms and procedures adopted in other residential school schemes sponsored by central/ state government to feed into the design of state level strategy/ policy for running these schools*

### **Highlights**

- *There are not too many references in internet; however, may exist in public domain in other forms. For future, a better method for probing the issue could be to access those specific records from respective governments/ authorities and also visiting these locations.*
- *Given any standard of living, the cost rates for the provisions for the children looked just primitive and demand urgent revision.*
- *The discourse of the assessment did not witness prevalence of the fullest of the provisions anywhere in any respectful condition. This anyway has not been a core ToR.*
- *The State of Kerala brings special trait in collating SC & ST authors' books in libraries thus attempting to draw organic chord with the learners.*
- *To identify, nurture and groom literary talents from amongst the SC & ST, concerned workshops are regularly organized. The state has created specific provisions to advance career opportunities for children that have shown outstanding merit in sports and such extra-curricular domains.*
- *Better provisions reported in Orissa by few times; however, follow the same line of norms as in Bihar.*
- *Animal breeders, other migratory communities have been attended in Rajasthan, thus manifesting opportunities aligned to occupations of the most the marginalized.*

## Food and nourishment

**213.** Unlike the states of Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Kerala the Bihar Government Orders do not clearly indicate unit-wise expenditure for students based on either age or class. Minute splitting of expenditure creates a clear understanding which may also easily be upgraded in the future; this may also assist in accountability of third party agencies in charge of food services. Division of expenditure per meal for five meals has been distinctly pointed out by the government of Tamil Nadu. Although information on exact menus, quantities or meal plans served in residential schools in other states was not available the expenditures and allocations were clearly mentioned.

**214.** Meal plans for the week are often exhibited as posters and charts in Bihar's SC/ ST residential school canteens but not followed; a fact which has been reinforced not only by first hand observations in the course of the study but also in discussions with

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: Sh. Kamal Majhi, Father of UpendraKumar,  
Class 8<sup>th</sup>, Dist. Madhubani

parents and children of the school. Parents were particularly vocal about their worries pertaining to the nutritive quality of food consumed by their children, most expressed this by saying "*Bhaath (rice) is served twice a day, maybe roti (wheat bread) should be served once at least*". Whether these balanced meal plans are not being followed due to sheer practices or because of a lack of sufficient funds (*there has been no revision in food expenditure since 1984*) has also been ascertained in this report.

## Clothing, cleaning and relevant provisions

**215.** GoB government orders clearly allocate Rs. 100 to be spent per child per month on various sundries, which include soap, oil and washing soda. The Government of Orissa however allocates Rs. 300 and an additional amount of kerosene for lighting school lamps. The GoB also has standardised norms and procedures for uniforms according to age. However, no particular fund for the maintenance/upkeep of torn/lost/damaged items is mentioned.

**216.** It was observed that most students and their parents complained about the provisions such as blankets being lacking altogether. In most schools, 3 children were found to be sharing one bed and one blanket. Not all had mosquito nets and lamps to study either. Clothing is often stolen and senior boys often make juniors wash their uniforms. Parents are not kept in the knowhow of the exact number of items including uniforms that are distributed to children as per norms. There is no clear mention in GoB orders also as to exact rationing

of phenyl and other cleaning agents for toilets and hostels; persons in charge of the same etc.

### **Books and learning aids**

**217.** Governments such as Kerala's, provide lump sum grants to children for meeting expenses of books. Provisions are made to provide children who fail 50% the original amount as well. The Government also provides books by SC/ST writers and organizes literary workshops and seminars to give SC/ST budding poets and children an opportunity to express themselves in public and improve their public speaking skills as well as benefit from a platform especially created for them.

**218.** Not only are the libraries non-existent in the case of GoB's SC/ST schools (despite provisions and allocations in accordance with class and age group) but even newspapers are not available in the schools. Children have no constructive activities to engage themselves in during free periods particularly since there is a gross shortage of teachers or during after school hours. Basic learning aids such as blackboards are not available in a majority of schools and those which have blackboards are in deplorable conditions and in some cases, are never used.

### **Sports and co-curricular activities**

**219.** In the case of Kerala, arrangements have been made to give sports training and assistance through the State Sports Council to tribal and SC children with exemplary sports talent. GoB has allocated money class wise for sports activities but there isn't even a dedicated sports/extra curricular activities class/period for children in Bihar's residential schools.

**220.** Playgrounds continue to remain undeveloped, young girls feel unsafe in playing outdoors and trained sports teachers often end up teaching maths and science. Co-curricular activities, particularly cultural/ sports events are not open to parents/ guardians of children who feel disconnected from the schools. Equipments also tend to arrive only before the matches.

### **Scholarships and extra support**

**221.** While Government of Tamil Nadu provides for special coaching classes for students in 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade, a special short term coaching class is also organized to prepare

children for professional course entrance exams through a 50:50 centrally sponsored scheme. The Orissa government also ensures smooth and transparent functioning of all financial transactions related to the scholarships which are allocated through Joint Accounts in banks. Special incentives are given to girl children as well such as cycles by the Tamil Nadu Government and monetary rewards by Rajasthan Government to ensure continuous education. Pre examination training centres have also been set up in Rajasthan by the Government to help prepare children for professional course entrance exams.

**222.** No such organized extra support was seen in the case of Bihar's residential schools where children are not even aware about professional courses they may be able to pursue. However it was observed that some children go out of the school for tuition, all this in order to pass their school examinations. The method of applying for the available matriculation scholarship is not clear to children nor their parents, most are unaware of the same.

### Vocational Training

**223.** Although Rs. 500 per month has been allocated for vocational training, no school had any system/classes in progress for providing such training to children in Bihar. Information and practices related to vocational training in residential schools of other states was not available either. The importance of vocational training and demand for it was expressed by parents and guardians in FGDs with them.

**224.** A comparative reflection on various aspects of the provisions, from across few states have been discussed as under -

Key norms : provisions & facilities	GoB ref. (2/3/ 2007)	Study observations	Comparative references from other states/ Gol (internet research)	Remarks
1	2	3	4	5
1. Food & nourishment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rs. 900 per student for ten months only.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The study has summarized a clear fall back in terms of not only the quality of the food but also its distribution. Whether this violates the norms set by the GoB, or is actually insufficient is also indicated.</li> <li>While meal plans have clearly been defined, they are not followed. This was observed by teams as well</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Residential school for children of migratory communities</i> - The Rajasthan Government has successfully introduced a scheme for animal breeders (<i>pashupalak</i>) to give a grant of Rs. 15,000 towards the food &amp; nutrition of children enrolled in the newly established residential school. (<a href="http://www.planning.rajasthan.gov.in/Annual20plan_0809/pdf/chap_20.pdf">http://www.planning.rajasthan.gov.in/Annual20plan_0809/pdf/chap_20.pdf</a>)</li> <li>The Tamil Nadu Department spends</li> </ul>	The other state allocation for residential school suggests that five rupees per day is being spent.

Key norms : provisions & facilities	GoB ref. (2/3/ 2007)	Study observations	Comparative references from other states/ Gol (internet research)	Remarks
1	2	3	4	5
		<p>as emerged in discussions with enrolled and dropout children as well as their parents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children are served plain rice and watery lentils twice a day in a majority of schools, the nutritive content of foods is poor overall and does not meet recommended dietary allowances.</li> </ul>	<p>Rs. 225 per student as food charges, (<a href="http://ncsc.nic.in/writereaddata/sublink2images/106.pdf">http://ncsc.nic.in/writereaddata/sublink2images/106.pdf</a>).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kerala, pre-primary education: - Financial assistance is given through Local Self Governments. A nursery school child gets Rs. 5 per day for meals.</li> </ul> <p>(<a href="http://www.kerala.gov.in/dept_sc/sheduledcastdevelopmentdept_index.htm#social">http://www.kerala.gov.in/dept_sc/sheduledcastdevelopmentdept_index.htm#social</a>)</p>	
2. Clothing, cleaning & relevant provisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rs. 100 per student per month for oil, soap and soda (<i>washing powder</i>).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a lot of emphasis in the schools on maintaining cleanliness. While most lack clean toilets and water facilities, children try to maintain scruples personal hygiene. Something they are equally particular about on returning home, as observed by their parents.</li> <li>While these items are allocated to children, junior children do not often get them as seniors keep them or steal them.</li> <li>Apart from the above, the distribution of these items is never timely.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rs. 300 per child given by Orissa government and other items include kerosene, body /hair oil, medicines and garments; 2 dresses per session ; (<a href="http://orissagov.nic.in/stsc/Pre-matric_scholarship.htm">http://orissagov.nic.in/stsc/Pre-matric_scholarship.htm</a>).</li> </ul>	
Books & learning aids	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Library :-</li> <li>- Primary school: 1000 per month</li> <li>- Middle school: 4000 per month</li> <li>- Higher</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No books and newspapers were available to children, the funds are not spent as per allocation.</li> <li>The lack of newspapers was perceived as a drawback in their education by senior children themselves who felt out of touch with the real world</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pre-Matric Education: For meeting school expenses lump sum grant is issued in the following scale: From standard 1 to 3 RS 70/- Standard 4 RS 75/- Standard 5 RS 110/- Standard 6 &amp; 7 RS 125/- Standard 8,9 &amp; 10 RS 175/- (Failed students can avail 50% of the above amounts. Monthly stipend is</li> </ul>	The logic or rationale behind increasing the allocation from lower to higher indicates that

Key norms : provisions & facilities	GoB ref. (2/3/ 2007)	Study observations	Comparative references from other states/ Gol (internet research)	Remarks
1	2	3	4	5
	education: 7000 per month - News paper Primary school: 2000 per month - Middle school: 3000 per month - Higher education: 4000 per month	while in school.	available to more disadvantaged candidates). <a href="http://www.kerala.gov.in/dept_sc/sheduledcastdevelopmentdept_index.htm#social">http://www.kerala.gov.in/dept_sc/sheduledcastdevelopmentdept_index.htm#social</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seminars &amp; Discussions: Discussions, Seminars, Awareness Camps and Medical Camps are being conducted participating SC/ST students, social workers and other members of the public</li> <li>• Assistance for publishing books: The chosen books from writers belonging to SC/ST category are being published with a financial assistance to the maximum of RS 20,000/- and distributed through Sahitya Pravarthaka Sahakarana Sanghom.</li> <li>• Literary Workshop: For upbringing literary talents in SC/ST category, literary workshop is organized annually. Eminent poets, scholars and writers participate in this, stimulating literary values in youngsters.  <a href="http://www.kerala.gov.in/dept_sc/sheduledcastdevelopmentdept_index.htm#social">http://www.kerala.gov.in/dept_sc/sheduledcastdevelopmentdept_index.htm#social</a></li> </ul>	students of higher class are considered that they would in a need of more books.
Sports & co-curricular provisions & exercises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Primary school: Rs.5000 per month</li> <li>• Middle school: Rs.7000 per month</li> <li>• Higher education: Rs.10,0000 per month</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Although allocations have been made classwise, junior students do not get to play games or access sports equipment.</li> <li>• Such equipment is not girl friendly.</li> <li>• Playgrounds continue to remain undeveloped.</li> <li>• Special diets/provisions for outstanding athletes not encouraged.</li> <li>• New materials such as sports uniforms and equipment are bought only prior to matches.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promotion &amp; Training to Sportsmen: The SC students who show unrelenting enthusiasm in sports are roped into Thiruvananthapuram schools. They are given accommodation in sports hostels and are trained with the assistance of Sports Council of Kerala.  <a href="http://www.kerala.gov.in/dept_sc/sheduledcastdevelopmentdept_index.htm#social">http://www.kerala.gov.in/dept_sc/sheduledcastdevelopmentdept_index.htm#social</a></li> </ul>	The same logic is applicable why the allocation increases with the class.

Key norms : provisions & facilities	GoB ref. (2/3/ 2007)	Study observations	Comparative references from other states/ Gol (internet research)	Remarks
1	2	3	4	5
Scholarships & such	Student attaining highest marks in matriculation will get a scholarship (provisioned for 5 SC, and 5 ST students )	specifications regarding the amount to be given as per the scholarship has been mentioned. The children were also largely unaware of the existence of such scholarships, particularly first generation literates and also 'first time admissions' who had no previous exposure/family member studying in similar schools to guide them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In order to encourage girl students for pursuing higher studies, free bicycles were provided from the year 2001-02 to all SCs/ STs/ SC converts studying in XI &amp; XII standards in Government/ aided schools. From 2003-04 onwards Government have decided to supply free bicycles to girl students of SCs/ STs/ SC converts studying in XI standard in Government/ aided schools.</li> <li>• Special coaching is given to the entire X and XII students for improving their performance in the public examinations. Also, special guides have been prepared and distributed to them free of cost. Computer facilities are also extended to more number of ADW/ GTR schools every year. Special short term coaching is given to SC/ ST candidates through Directorate of Employment and Training to appear for professional course entrance examination under Centrally Sponsored Scheme on 50:50 basis.</li> <li>• Coaching classes are conducted for 21 days in 29 centers for 1200 candidates per year in the State. (<a href="http://www.tn.gov.in">www.tn.gov.in</a>)</li> <li>• Payment of Pre-Matric Scholarships to boarders through Joint Bank Account will not be mandatory. The Drawing &amp; Disbursing Officers are allowed to draw scholarship and deposit it in the bank account of the school. Since the scholarship is drawn in advance, this money should be advanced as required from time to time to Assistant Superintendent of the hostel to manage the mess. The Assistant Superintendent is</li> </ul>	No specific scholarship for girls, the sum of the scholarship is not mentioned clearly. (in relevance to circular)



Key norms : provisions & facilities	GoB ref. (2/3/ 2007)	Study observations	Comparative references from other states/ Gol (internet research)	Remarks
1	2	3	4	5
			<p>authorized to incur expenditure in coordination with the Mess Committee. The Head Master as the Superintendent of the hostel will be in overall charge to ensure smooth functioning of the hostels.</p> <p>(<a href="http://orissagov.nic.in/st%20sc/Pre%20matric_scholarship.htm">orissagov.nic.in/st sc/Pre matric_scholarship.htm</a>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incentives to Girl Children: Incentives are provided to girl children belonging to Scheduled Castes from 1994-95 to avoid dropouts and encourage the enrolment of girls.</li> <li>• Government is giving Rs.500/- per annum at the rate of Rs. 50/- per month for months to 60,000 SC girls studying in standards III to V in the educationally backward districts.</li> <li>• Similarly to encourage their continuous schooling, an incentive of Rs. 1000/- at the rate of Rs. 100/- p.m. is provided to 30,000 girls entering VI Std., in the entire State. Totally, a sum of Rs.600 lakhs is proposed for these schemes for 2003-04.</li> </ul> <p>(<a href="http://www.planning.rajasthan.gov.in/Tenth%20Plan/Chapter/PDF/chap26-sw.pdf">www.planning.rajasthan.gov.in/Tenth%20Plan/Chapter/PDF/chap26-sw.pdf</a>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PETC (Pre-Examination Training Centers) : This scheme has been introduced to prepare the students to participate in the competitive examination with full preparation. This scheme is meant for weaker sections of the society. To achieve this objective, Rs.250 lacs have been proposed during X Plan period and an amount of Rs.50 lacs are being proposed for the year 2002-03. In all 37 centers would run.</li> </ul> <p>(<a href="http://www.planning.rajasthan.gov.in/Tenth%20Plan/Chapter/PDF/chap26-sw.pdf">www.planning.rajasthan.gov.in/Tenth%20Plan/Chapter/PDF/chap26-sw.pdf</a>)</p>	

Key norms : provisions & facilities	GoB ref. (2/3/ 2007)	Study observations	Comparative references from other states/ Gol (internet research)	Remarks
1	2	3	4	5
Vocational training	Rs. 500 per month	No measures or avenues for vocational training were observed in schools; even teachers were not aware of such allocations. In conversation with parents and students the possibility of training was considered appealing and even demanded. There is also a sheer lack of any skills (craft/ hobby related) in schools to foster the creative streak in children. Parents of SC girls had particularly expressed the need of such training for their daughters.		

**225.** The specific ToR – 4 was a difficult dimension of the assignment. Initially it was perceived that a secondary assessment would be possible with information available in internet. However, it was not to be so. Despite drawing intense academic energy, quality of the information available in Internet was inadequate, something that do not provide confidence to recommend specific and actionable measures. A good range of relevant websites were explored to not great effect and result.

## **ToR – 5 :** *Recommendations on strengthening the teaching learning processes and other factors affecting quality of education to ensure quality education at par with the best – both in short term and in the longer run*

### **Highlights**

- *Quality, timeliness and distribution of food, inherent partisan attitude adopted for children of higher and lower classes, unnecessary socio-cultural discretion imposed by the teachers; reluctant discharge of NGO mandate in mess-management etc. are few glaring issues seeking urgency in redressal;*
- *Teachers' development demands a rather radical, renewed approach - - holds the most critical significance in improving quality;*
- *Students of the residential schools are growing academically and experientially, if at all, in an isolated atmosphere and are possibly not adequately updated to outer environments. Such exposure must be introduced*
- *Music and sports recognized as the centre-stage in honing natural talent in SC & ST children. A well-weighed induction is warranted to realize a regime nurturing abundance of such talents.*
- *NGO contracts on managing school kitchen of the residential school should be reviewed against pragmatic and updated considerations of cost, effectiveness (nutrition and satisfaction). Also viability of a parameter-based feedback may be introduced to tracking performances.*
- *Evolving 'outsource models' based on 'performance guarantee contracts' can be a unique proposal especially for non-teaching aspects*

226. The recommendations are being contemplated in a grid of priority & concerned support-sources. In the succeeding pages, the recommendations have been detailed.

Nature of recommendations (source & admin. viability)	Priority of implementation		
	Alarming <sup>1</sup> (Short-term; Sought implementation within 6 months)	Urgent <sup>2</sup> (Short-term; sought implementation within 1 year)	Important <sup>3</sup> (Long-term; sought implementation within 3 year)
1. Provisions exist - seeks only proper implementation	Conducting a 'performance audit of the food provisions' : Ref. Para - 235	Reviewing, upgrading NGO contracts for management of kitchen : Ref. Para - 236	Undertake quick on-site appraisal of school facilities, take remedial measures in a phased manner : Para – 237
2. New components; within the scopes of SC ST welfare deptt.	<i>Inconclusive learning due to inadequate discussion with the departmental officials; but this is a crucial scope to accommodate several key recommendations.</i>		
3. New components – seeks to make proposals to GoB to pursue the (mahadalit) mission objectives & perspectives.	Subject refresher training for teachers in Maths, Science & English; orientation to NCF and training for adoption of NCF principles in teaching practices : Ref. Para – 244 & 245	Socio-cultural orientation to teachers; sensitization on issues around exclusion : Ref. Para – 239 & 240	Developing institutional leadership capacity in teachers; building administrative & managerial capacities : Ref. Para – 241 & 243
4. New generation initiatives – piloting through state/ non-state assistance may be contemplated.	–	–	Assessment of change-agents engaged in administrative delivery; map time & motion effects of decisions; develop compatibility between the department & the schools; diversification in school governance & management : Ref. Para – 232 & 233 and Ref. Para – 246 & 247
5. Component/ Content appealing for PPP initiatives - - seek broad-based stake-owning.	–	Creating disposition fund at the school level; creating models for performance guaranteed professional teaching cadres, relevant empanelment : Ref. Para 250 & 251	–

<sup>1</sup> Those which may cause incidences of illness and outrageous retaliation by school students.

<sup>2</sup> Which may be termed as denial of basic human necessity, such must be ensured within first one year's in an uncompromising manner.

<sup>3</sup> Within 1 to 3 years; these may not be avoided at any cost. Performance accountability may be fixed for the concerned administrative line function with optimal clarity.

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6. New services – fit for outsource agencies.	–	Explore resource components potent in strengthening functioning of the schools; respond to newer research needs : Ref. Para 22	–

## Detail description of recommended measures *vis-a-vis* specific observations

### The core change agents remained out of the purview of the study

**227.** It would be worth considering, as the study team does in hindsight, whether or not the current discourse was able to bring within the purview of the assessment all the core change-agents, teachers certainly being one. All through the discourse of the assessment, centrality of issues around which the assessment revolved were teachers, school facilities, other stakeholders (more in terms of their cluttered perceptions) and what, to some extent, experiences from other states etc. guide in terms of provisions and norms. Bulk of the assessment pointing its remedial measures at the teachers, the present section also tries to define few out-of-the-box suggestions, which in given challenging environment of SC ST residential schooling looks reasonable to consider. Given contemporary environment of the mainstream schooling, rapidly changing policy and programme paradigms, indeed the study team strongly feels that such recommendations would bring much improved programme resiliency and impact.

**228.** However, the assessment in its several operational milestones realized, considering the programme being a mandate of the Department of SC ST Welfare and not the education department, the key change agents are not the teachers alone. The current assignment does not probe into the administrative dynamics that plays around the line functions : from departmental authorities at the state level to its nodal executives at the district level, the district welfare officer. While, the programme governance would understandably have links to the objectives of the maha-dalit mission, its managerial orientations, intents and operational efficacy may not be best suited to the best of school operation.

**229.** Thus, arguably the current study does not address the other set of change-agents operating in the existing line of administrators and executives. Mandate of these change-

agents, their programme orientation & skills indeed is to effectively deliver a rather unusual service (in context of the department's other mandates), such as the residential schooling with all its intricate dimensions and facilities. Needs no mention, besides bearing adequate competence to discharge the committed services, the department must attain and demonstrate higher compatibility to work with each of the schools, treat these as distinct institutions committed to definite educational and relevant affirmative mandates.

**230.** Therefore, before making other recommendations, the current section finds it relevant to share that effective implementation of the recommendations made here would also depend on how such are perceived, accepted at the administrative levels and whether or not with the requisite intent, understanding and spirit to implement the recommendations. Here, it is necessary to record that a separate **assessment to measure significance of administrative processes** must also be undertaken, underlining critical players that make maximum impact on the school and concerned practices/ functions.

- **A 'time & motion study' of admin processes and executive functions leading to proper functioning of the schools must be carried out : impact areas would be research questions 2, 3 and 6.**

### **Committed school conditions is a prerequisite to quality of education**

**231.** The assessment reinforces the fact that quality of education comes as a consequence of a host of quantitative preconditions of reasonable quality. All previous studies and the current assessment are unanimously critical of the school conditions in terms of facilities and basic amenities. The following measures can be implemented with suggested priority to improve upon the scenario and channelize improved attention towards quality of education.

### **Quality of food, timeliness and quantity**

**232.** Observation based on which the recommendations have been contemplated are that (a) apparently quantity is not a problem; lots of allied issues are seriously questionable. Quality to top the scale, timeliness and distribution of food, inherent preferential attitude adopted for children of higher and lower classes and unnecessary socio-cultural discretion imposed by teachers; and (b) Reluctant discharge of NGO mandate/ responsibility in managing the affairs; mess-management and distribution etc.; seemingly underway without effective influence of institutional arrangements perceived for smoother operation of the mess (*ref. Deptt. Circular dated : Aug. 1998*).

**233.** NGO contracts on managing school kitchen of the residential school should be reviewed against pragmatic and updated considerations of cost, effectiveness (nutrition and satisfaction) and viability of parameter/ feedback-based performance tracking. While costing must be revised in light of inflation and nutritional demands of children of growing age and also in view of meeting demands of children involved in sporting activities,

- **NGO contracts may be reviewed; quality standards and operational protocols must be defined; performance review modalities must be put to array : Impact areas would be around research question - 5**

### **School facilities**

**234.** This is an area that demands a rather detail and meticulous assessment given degree of awfulness of the facilities; considering the case as alarming. Despite not forming a core of this assessment, the report may fall short of space to accommodate the apathy and insensitiveness demonstrated by the state/ department and functionaries, teachers as the face of it. It is recommended that the area must undergo **an immediate and deeper assessment**; most preferably bringing 'quality standard-based outsource models' for non-teaching aspects of residential schools. The following pointers may seek intricate focus.

- Cleanliness, hygiene issues with respect of children's boarding & classroom arrangements. Focus on hostel/ residential arrangements
- Facilities to meet extreme seasonal conditions
- Medical facilities, measures to meet health contingencies
- Sports, cultural, entertainment/ recreation etc.
- Institutional arrangements/ mechanisms and relevant validity

### **Teachers' development demands a rather radical, renewed approach - - holds the most critical significance**

**235.** To impact quality of education teachers needs to be skilled in host of contemporary school dimensions - - administration & conflict management, developing understanding and dealing with the issues of marginalization, relevant counter processes. Studies undertaken in the past have come out with excellent observations; during years 2001 and 2005-06; the current assessment (2009-10) makes almost no departure in terms of defining issues relevant to teachers, learning environments and teacher-pupil relationship etc. As following,

recommendations have been made against **issues** around which observations have been gathered.

**236.** Teachers' organic alignment with pupil; respective **socio-cultural orientation** etc. have not been appraised in past study reports; therefore, seeks some analysis in the present report. The current assessment finds that unless the teaching community appreciates the perspective, rationale and spirit behind the initiative of SC ST residential schooling, not much ground could be covered. The assessment clearly sensed underline; however, strong currents of social bias within the teachers. It was even worse to learn that the teachers do not bear much of a sense of appreciation for the initiative as an affirmative action by the state. Very few teachers are from SC ST background; and those not, do not share understanding about the specific socio-cultural dimensions and associated marginalization with the subject communities.

**237.** Teachers' development programme must encompass the critical components of social exclusion and marginalization, sensitizing the teachers through a *process-based training pedagogy*. In several sections, the present report underlines sound evidence of discrimination being perpetuated against the children sheer because of their birth identities. Structured sensitization of the teachers seems to offer the basic solution to the problem; however, in select blatant cases of discrimination, legal options may also be considered to set precedence.

**238.** **Institutional leadership capability** of the teachers has been reported even by the earlier study reports as dismal. Indeed, the current assessment observes that the very idea of 'institutional leadership' or even considering school as an institution of learning would be an over statement. Complete lack of perspective and unpreparedness was observed with the head-masters from the perspective of **3 key functional areas** of the residential schools : (1) school infrastructure and associated facilities, (2) issues around academic performance and academic excellence of students in the schools and (3) stabilizing school governance, management and performance administration.

**239.** As the earlier reports also recommended, the SC ST welfare department must consider, as part of teacher's development program, distinct sessions aiming teachers to (a) learn institutional development perspective, (b) develop understanding and competencies on relevant subjects/ issues and (c) facilitate evolution of operational strategies at the individual school levels. Given good performance track record of select schools, such may be introduced as pilot in such few schools, benchmark institutional performances and share improved results with other schools to facilitate systemic adoption of the school development



program across board. UNICEF may seek to evolve **framework of a teacher development program** for (a) the existing head masters and (b) those prospective/ officiating as school in-charge. UNICEF can initiate development of a detailed module for such a ‘teacher development program for the consideration of the department.

**240. Administrative & management capacity** of the teachers do fall within the purview of the above discussion. The third fold of the key functional areas “school governance, management and performance administration” is a critical area of teachers’ capacity. Evidently, the physical status of the schools suggest that teachers’ not only are ill-equipped to handle the aspect; little that they are expected to perform are in compliance to departmental/ official circulars. The study observes that structured, function-aligned training programs must be contemplated to make school management and administration effective and thus, bring corresponding effect on teaching & academic performances. Such training does not naturally align with other areas of teachers’ development; therefore, should be perceived as distinct events.

**241.** However, **the most pressing areas** must be addressed first. Extremely poor quality levels in the education delivered in the schools under reference should be first factored with teachers’ competency. This assessment affirms its observation, the teachers’ need to and must be developed in basic subject proficiency to teach at class VII and class X levels on key subjects like mathematics, Science and English. An affirmative process may begin with an assessment of all the teachers, school to school to develop into a database of subject competencies and specific gaps. Such could be developed through on specific subject refresher trainings, modules of which can be a key deliverable of the assessment. This looks urgently required, rapidly beginning from teachers of higher classes (class VII, IX and X).

**242.** The teachers conceded to the fact that they have lost touch with their pedagogical trainings, whatever skills they acquired, which indeed has extinct owing to lack of operational practice and suffering lack of peer-group sensitization and review. Even if they are left with some residual skills, the worlds of pedagogy and classroom transaction have undergone huge scientific and technical transformation. The National Curriculum Framework 2005 defines the whole new-look dimensions of teaching and learning processes. They not only seek immediate cognizance, the teachers must be (a) sensitized to the rationale behind and the content of changes perceived and directed in the NCF and (b) trained to adopt the principles of teaching and classroom transactions. Such must be began with a quick sensitization of the second-line teachers (that are not due for immediate retirement, however are influential to school proceedings).

- **Multi-pronged teachers' development program must be instituted. To start with, UNICEF may consider evolving a teachers development framework/ proposal in prevailing context and on-ground evidences - - academic results and other such testimonies : Impact areas would be research questions 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6.**

### **Diversifying school governance and management**

**243.** Given the impressions of various sections interface during the study, even those spoken to informally; many indeed responded to suggestions made by the study team, it could be a good option to diversify school management for an improved future. Non-teaching services can well be brought under purview of perceived quality standards. Indeed, the study team concurred with a wider sense among the clientele, relevant peer group (parents, relatives) that it would be worth to consider bring in professional contractual models in handling school management affairs, under a contracted administrator. This would; thus, lessen burden of non-teaching responsibilities on the teachers, allowing them to entirely focus on academic performances. Such as already been tried through introduction of a system whereby school kitchens have been contracted to private parties. In view of teachers' competency to deal with academic responsibilities and assessed demands to expand teaching efforts, such looks to be more viable suggestion. **The current assessment did not exactly probe into such issues; therefore, recommends that such could be assessed through a distinct specialized discourse.**

**244.** The study team was appraised that district welfare officers are mandated for regular review teachers/ school performance. Dismal status of the schools suggest grave limitations in the review procedure and seeks to follow (a) an independent study of quality and degree of logical performance interpretation being made by the review forum, (b) a time and motion study of administrative and academic decisions and concerned processes and (c) assessment of institutional recording systems engaged with such reviews; with which details such as carried out, if any. The study team observed that financial allocations, relevant apex level operations are susceptible to associate same degree of sensitivity and prioritization while these percolate down the administrative strata; resultantly at the school level reduces importance of such and thus affects school performance. Through the suggested study, **regulatory roles for the department** and concerned procedural formats can be evolved.

### **Soft skills; issues pertaining to motivation and leadership development in children**

**245.** The study team observed that the students of these residential schools are growing academically and experientially in an isolated atmosphere and are possibly not adequately updated to outer environments, respective competitiveness for a long period. Also, given peer-group, family and social background of the children, these are likely to lack range of soft skills that one would need to demonstrate academic and educational worthiness attained in schools - - fearless expression, oration and articulation, presentation skills and techniques to overcome barriers of communication. In an environment of need of having leadership traits, excellent communication skills and creative abilities to address day to day challenges; the students must need adequate orientation and training. This is an area that the study finds that the teachers stand extremely modest compared to contemporary and mainstream expectations (ref. teachers' specimen competency matrix).

**246.** Managing, nurturing the children's perspective about life, dignity and career relevant counseling and conflict resolution etc. stand significant areas for teachers' capacity building. The teachers, as the study observed, are susceptible to not respect (a) the background of the children and their pertinent need to grow as mainstream citizen of the India and (b) their being as resident at the school, away from their families and peer-group. Teachers therefore, are supposed to play a mentoring role; which the assessment unambiguously suggests is much below par. **The study recommends, while the existing teaching cadre may be urgently brought within a teacher development program, focus should be laid on developing a new professional cadre that can match contemporary expectations and live up to the aspirations of the subject communities.**

### **Competent teaching : addressing the issue of intent and adequacy**

**247.** Thus, the above paragraphs indicate what competent teaching in the schools under reference may be defined as. As the discussions with stakeholder indicated, there is a large gap between the existing and required teaching staff. Across age-groups, new or old, the study observes that recruiting new teachers in the given administrative and academic culture, the best results are likely to remain susceptible. The study team; therefore, recommends, it would more viable to **commit teaching quality and subject proficiency through empanelled professional services** instead of recruiting permanent teachers. Also, it would worth to consider to innovative mechanisms like neighbourhood teaching support, primarily with existing teachers and later broad-base such practices even including the perceived empanelled teachers.

**248.** A separate assessment may be instituted to look into the viability issues. The suggestion could be (a) empanel well-trained and subject-proficient freelance teachers under

annual contracting systems for rendering subject-specified teaching sessions in given number of schools with defined performance standards (e.g. 80% students securing more than 75% marks etc.), (b) have adequate number of teachers in the panel to support core subjects such as Mathematics, Science and English (weak areas with the existing teaching cadre), also keeping in view school-specific gaps. The present study strongly recommends, while the mainstream teaching remains with existing teachers, new & committed teaching practices must be introduced to bring quality education and hence, improved results; to be commenced as an arrangement to fill in gaps. A brainstorming session, followed by a structured deliberation, a broad-based consultation may be perceived to understand the viability of the proposal.

### **Introducing renewed approach to pupil development**

**249.** Predictable cases of sporting excellence, strong orientation and inclination towards music and interactive skills were observed in all schools. While there observed a natural ability in children on these extra-curricular subjects, glaring gaps was assessed in coaching/ mentoring ability in teachers. In none of the schools specialized teachers for these were observed; evidently therefore, the children, their parents seeking relevant subject mentoring not alone in context of children's likings but also in view of relevant career possibilities.

**250.** It was felt by the study team, also articulated by parents of the children that alongside school academics, renewed focus on co- & extracurricular activities must be laid. Music and sports recognized as the centre-stage in honing natural talent in SC & ST children. Not only seeking to arrange specialized teachers/ trainers/ coaches on these subjects, the study hereby recommends that the curriculum must define extra- & co-curricular subjects in view of opportunities of residential schooling. The department, within the purview of affirmative measures in impacting the children of the SC, ST communities, must make sound initiatives also in terms of bringing about relevant infrastructure and necessary facilities.