

EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT

For Project Titled

**A Local Self Government Initiative For Contextually More Appropriate
Education For Rural Youth To Alleviate Rural Poverty
(Second Phase)
(2017-2020)
Project Partner**

**AHEAD Initiatives
With
iiINTERest**

**For
THE CIVIL SOCIETY FUND OF CISU (CIVIL SOCIETY IN
DEVELOPMENT)**



Background and Context

Under Phase-II of the project, “A Local Self Government Initiative for a contextually more Appropriate Education for Rural Youth to Alleviate Rural Poverty”, AHEAD Initiatives made a number of interventions envisaged beforehand in the project districts of Alipurduar and Purulia in West Bengal and in Mayurbhanj district of Odisha.

The objective was to address the felt need of facilitating and supplementing the ongoing mainstream educational initiatives of the State government in rural West Bengal to contextualize school education more suitably for the children and the youth with the ultimate goal of alleviating rural poverty.

As required by the resource providers of the project, iiINTERest of Denmark, the report here under presents a brief summary of the post-intervention Key Outcomes of the Project with respect to the stipulated indicators, preceded by a few introductory words.

Introductory Brief:

The Evaluation Process was based on the methodological approach that included stakeholder consultation meetings, FGDs, personal interviews and random interactions with project beneficiaries during field visits.

The evaluation exercise has been conducted in *Kalchini* block of *Alipurduar* District and *Baghmundi* block of Purulia district in West Bengal, and also in *Joshiipur* block of Mayurbhanj district of Odisha.

The review/ evaluation process suffered recurrent setbacks and had to be eventually stalled for a long time by the all-pervasive intrusion and impact of Covid-19. Fortunately, much of the field visits, focused group discussions and interviews and some of the required data collection had already been done, limitations and deficiencies notwithstanding.

While this is the picture at the end of the evaluator, the ground-level scenario on the school education front was marked by discontinuity of mainly the teaching-learning process for a long indefinite period (since the state-wide lockdown beginning in March, 2020) and the obvious consequences of the impact of Covid-19 especially on the mental health of the children.

Under such disturbing conditions, the evaluation process had to keep in consideration the formidable difficulties faced by AHEAD Initiatives in their activities under the education project. The Evaluation Report has to be read keeping in mind this broader background situation and constraints in mind.

A redeeming aspect in the midst of the lurid picture is the commendable initiative of AHEAD by resuming their ‘After School’ activities under the Education Programme after three months of the lockdown maintaining all the precautions and obeying the Covid Regulations of the day.

Three more types of activities were also taken up by AHEAD in the rural school segment and carried out after three months of the March lockdown.

- (a) A few ‘vacation camps’ for children were organised by the State School Education authorities.
- (b) A number of workshops for *targeted* teachers were held.

- (c) Quite a few virtual workshops were conducted for *all* targeted teachers in West Bengal. School education officials also participated in those workshops.

These workshops were meant to discuss and finalise the pilot implementation of the class-wise training manuals on experiential Activity Based Learning (ABL) lesson plans based on the formal syllabus and curriculum.

The evaluator verified the first two from secondary information while he attended a few of the virtual workshops mentioned under point (c) above.

Summary of Observations of the Evaluator regarding the key outcomes vis-à-vis pre-stipulated indicators of the activities under the Project 16- 1919- SP- sep initiated by AHEAD:

Indicators and Achievements:

Immediate objective 1S

1.1 *3 Block LSGIs to be in partnership with block state controlled school authorities in West Bengal and Odisha, having adopted an intensive strategy with GPs and established 44 LSGI-School partnerships in 22 Gram Panchayats (LSGIs) using demonstrated approaches and providing contextually appropriate localised input on appropriate nutrition, health, sustainable livelihoods, environment, self-governance and other necessary life skills.*

Despite the challenging situation, the attainment in the project districts of West Bengal has been reasonably good as per the indicators. However, in case of Odisha, the achievement has been a little deficient because of factors exogenous and non-controllable to the project. In other words, constrained optimum has been achieved in Odisha.

MoUs have already been signed with 2 Block LSGIs of *Kalchini* of *Alipurduar* District and *Bagmundi* of *Purulia* district in West Bengal as well as with 19 of the targeted GPs (38 schools). In all of these cases, big success has been achieved in engaging sub-district and district-level officials in the State's education departments to pursue pedagogic exercise with contextually appropriate localised inputs in their schools.

Due to administrative and political disturbances, the outcome in *Jashipur* Block in *Odisha* covering 3 Gram Panchayats and 6 schools has fallen short of the desired level. Still, MOUs were signed with the 3 Gram Panchayats of the *Simlipal* Biodiversity-Reserve with valuable help of the district school education authorities (in the absence of any assistance from the Block LSGI), as reported by the AHEAD field staff as well as the partner CBO representatives.

It was also learnt that 192 Local Resource Persons did assist the motivated teachers to regularize 30 ABL modules which were regularized in the intensive schools out of the more than 40 modules enriched with contextually appropriate localised supplementary inputs.

Moreover, from the concerned local government institutions, it was learnt that they have supported an additional 49 state-controlled schools in their areas to take up many of the activities in the targeted 22 GPs.

It needs to be mentioned that under the 'After School Initiative' of AHEAD, the villagers, especially the women, have re-learnt or updated their traditional skill of making broomstick, *palo*, sitting mats made of dried grass and other tiny domestic utilities made with locally

available materials to meet their household requirements and saving their small resources. The evaluator had found this during his personal visit to some of the project villages.

1.2 3 Block level LSGIs in the 3 new districts of Bankura, North 24 Parganas (Sunderbans) and Birbhum of West Bengal to mainstream demonstrated approaches in 6 School-GP partnerships providing contextually appropriate localized input on appropriate nutrition, health, sustainable livelihoods, environment, self-governance and other necessary life skills.

These indicators have been surpassed in terms of achievement.

In the districts of Bankura, North 24Parganas (Sundarban) and Birbhum, 3 Block LSGIs and 3 Gram Panchayats entered into MoUs with AHEAD and its institutional partners. They have been largely successful in intensively targeting 6 schools.

An additional 47 schools in the 3 GPs (and one other GP) have adapted demonstrated approaches.

The evaluator experienced from one of the well-attended inception meetings at Bishnupur of Bankura district on 30th. August, '21, attended by him' how effectively the teachers have been motivated and imparted lessons in contextually appropriate teaching methods. This was particularly evident during the feedback session of the meeting when teachers placed their queries and suggestions on various issues like reopening of schools, ways of drawing students to the schools once the closed school doors open again, opinion about study load (curriculum & syllabus), etc.

From the end of AHEAD, the points emphasized about teaching (facilitating) –learning were (a) 'Socialising' school education system, (b)'Localising' and 'indigenising' the education system', (c)'Vernacularisation' of teaching learning process, and (d)'Mutuality', 'Openness' and 'Realistic' imparting of knowledge.

Besides, under the purview of AHEAD, all the schools have developed kitchen gardens in a participatory manner and have been nurturing the same sincerely. In the process, the schools in partnership with the concerned GPs, introduced the various seeds, relevant information about nutritional value of different vegetables and crops, their implications for good health and environment, etc. The feedback from the participating teachers in large numbers at the said meeting was really encouraging. The evaluator had elaborate personal interviews with a cross-section of teachers reaffirmed that the meetings / workshops organized by AHEAD had triggered new thinking and enthusiasm among the teachers. However, all of them had been eagerly and impatiently waiting for reopening of the schools and having direct interaction with the students. The latter could not be contacted because of the pandemic restrictions and fear thereof.

In the context of nutrition, special mention needs to be made of the Nutrition Garden initiatives undertaken by a large number of schools in Tantipara under Rajnagar PS. While developing these they are also imparted preliminary knowledge about seeds and hands-on training in seed identification, seed preservation, soil preparation, sowing of seeds, the nutrition content of various vegetables and fruits, nutrition-rich fruit nursery development and growing a 5-fruit nutrition-rich orchard at the children's homestead as far as possible.

1.3 *LSGI resources from PS and GP are supposed to flow to schools totalling not less than 25% of costs (to meet critical gaps in school authorities allocated resources).*

The achievement in regard to this indicator has been very successful as reported by the concerned AHEAD functionaries.

The Gram Panchayats and Panchyat Samitis collaborating with AHEAD Initiatives in implementing the intervention have reportedly channelised financial resources to meet the critical gaps. Till March 2020, a sum of 481,000 INR was channelized from LSGIs to schools as a result of successful advocacy by AHEAD.

1.4 *District and State authorities are to initiate providing mainstream financial resources to Block LSGIs recognising the need for localisation of contextually appropriate supplementary curricula as a necessary educational input for rural schools; and local history, local geography, local language, indigenous knowledge and culture needs to be integrated as a key educational resource.*

Through a series of exposure visits and presentations at multiple levels of administration at both State and District level it has been possible to channelize 1,005,075 INR by State and District authorities to Block LSGIs and GPs for localisation of contextually appropriate supplementary curricula.

This was also reported by the concerned AHEAD personnel at the headquarters and their Field directors as well as by some of the LSG officials in informal private meetings with them.

It is to be noted in this context that that the lockdown very adversely impacted the level of contributions by the State and the District authorities, which was supposed to be substantially more in the last year of the intervention.

It has been learnt by the evaluator from the concerned main stakeholders that discussion and formal exchange of communication are underway with the LSGIs in Bengal as they are keen about contributing to the costs of continuing the initiative if supervisory support is forthcoming from AHEAD Initiatives even after the intervention formally ends from the 40% 'Untied Fund' received by them from the Central Finance Commission.

Immediate objective 2

2.1 *The 'After School' program for skill building of rural youth with low education attainment levels are conducted regularly in at least 50% (or 25) of the target schools.*

This objective has been over-fulfilled as per the given indicator.

All 50 (100%) of intensively targeted state-controlled schools have regular 'After School' programmes running for youth with low educational attainment level.

As per preliminary data from the local evaluator (by end-2020) show that 70 non-staff & non-CRO Trainers from the various local government departments and other institutions have been able to impart skilling to 7,960 youth through multiple short session modules at their local schools. 12 skill building modules have been established, implemented and are formalised (having a set program with elaborate instruction manuals). 53 exposure visits were organised for state and district level authorities, and 5 Reports / 5 Presentations have been prepared including 19 Case studies which have established the success of the well-tailored 'After School' Programme.

The evaluator had the opportunity to engage in a Focussed Group Discussion with a group of village women – nine of them house wives/ mothers and 5 young girls – all of whom had attended the sewing and pith (*shola*) work, a kind of threatened traditional handicraft work at the After School programme initiated by the AHEAD Initiatives at the *Kumiradaha Prathamik Vidyalaya* at Onda (South) of Kantabari GP of Bankura district.

The meeting was attended also by the two trainers from nearby localities Ms. Falguni Ghosh and Narayan Lohar, both having excellent personal skill and training competence in sewing and pith work respectively, as endorsed by all the trainees. All of them have learnt the trades well enough to meet their domestic requirements as well as small quantity of external (local) demand. All of them exuded a lot of interest and eagerness to continue the programme but lamented the year-long interruption caused by the pandemic. This is not the only instance as the evaluator gained similar vigorous response regarding the 'After School' programmes wherever these have been introduced with concomitant success like in *Banjamuna Prathamik Vidyalay* in Onda Block of Bankura district (where training in traditional tribal songs and dance, a tradition on the wane, is also conducted alongside select Tagore songs; and training in drawing, painting etc are also imparted).

In other districts/ states as well, the After School programme has gained popular response, like in Kalchini (Alipurduar district) and Hingaljanj (North 24 Parganas district adjacent to Sundarbans), Bagmundi (of Purulia district) besides Jashipur (of Mayurbhanj district) in Odisha state. In Tantipara under Rajnagar PS commendable initiatives have been taken in regard to the After School programme where varieties of sewing including that of making Jute bags are being taught by a handsome number of resource persons of the locality.

The evaluator feels that the After School programme, because of its attractiveness from the pecuniary perspective as well as its significance from the empowerment perspective besides the sheer entertainment appeal of doing something aesthetic hands-on, has special significance and importance in a holistic education model. It may also be particularly helpful in making a breakthrough in drawing students (especially girl children, and often their mothers as well) in the 'back to school' drive as the schools are about to reopen in the wake of the worst spells of the Pandemic.

So, a lot more emphasis on this programme is strongly recommended in this direction in the next phase of the project.

2.2 *At least 25% (625) of rural youth who have taken part in the after-school modules are actively using their new skills to supplement their income.*

Despite a three-month interruption due to Covid-19, the 'After School' programme for rural youth was highly successful. With extra resources from local government, the demand among the youth could partly be met as the number of participants in the after-school modules could be increased.

Hence, in addressing the skilling needs of the youth **7,960 youth** as opposed to the **targeted 2,500** have by end 2020 taken part in the after-school modules. An estimated **2,217 youth** (as opposed to the 'at least' **625 youth**) have been able to continue the activities which are providing supplementary income (figures from local evaluator, see above). The progress has reduced their vulnerability to a large extent and in the post-pandemic phase it has been observed that several youths who have got training from After

School based initiatives are engaging themselves in multiple interventions by using locally available natural resources.

The evaluator's elaborate observations and opinion on this point are given under 2.1.

2.3 *The success of LSGIs 'after school' programme ensure support from the West Bengal State Council for Vocational Training (WBSCVT) for National and State mainstream funding for LSGI managed Skill building.*

Amount of support from National and State mainstream funding for LSGI managed Skill building: Schematic Fund: **2,787,245 INR.**

Clarification regarding target groups in the 21-3353-CSP-UI – iiiINTERest project Proposal

144 of the 150 schools to be intensively targeted in the present application **are different** from those that have been targeted intensively in the ongoing intervention. The method and criteria for selection are as follows:

The 6 schools that are targeted *again*, have been selected based on their successful implementation of the previous intervention, as well as the support and engagement offered by the local authorities in their areas.

The intention behind continuing the intervention in these schools is two-fold: Firstly, to support and test the long-term effects of bridging the objectives and activities of the previous intervention with the official mainstreaming of extra-curricular activities, as presented in this new intervention. Secondly, to work as 'exemplary' schools, that provide positive evidence of the initiative to the teachers, children, parents and local authorities in the new schools, hence following a 'lead-by-example' strategy.

The remaining 144 schools targeted in this intervention are *new* schools, which have been selected based on a poverty-criteria, using statistical data of the region to map out the poorest of the GPs. The assessment includes multiple socioeconomic factors such as household income, educational attainments, poverty measures and caste-and ethnicity characteristics. In addition to these criteria and through extensive and ongoing dialogue with representatives of all tiers of the Indian government system (especially in the later part of 2020), the schools are selected based on an assessment of the appropriate local authority's willingness to enter into a partnership with AHEAD.

The IEC Thrust

There has been some print media coverage of the AHEAD project interventions including various programmes in Bengali and language local newspapers particularly regarding the contextually appropriate teaching-learning methods including virtual workshops focused on the same.

Besides extensive photographic coverage of the various activities of AHEAD on ground-level mainly in the project areas, a large number of video materials comprising 41 ABL videos for teachers and one video film in Oriya language (for the Odisha programme) titled '*Adarsha Shikshak*' have also been prepared by AHEAD Central Office.

Scanned copies of the print media coverage as well as a detailed list of the video materials and the film are appended with this report.

The Challenges Ahead

One of the formidable challenges for AHEAD Initiatives in the near future will be withdrawal from a particular area on completion of the scheduled project period even if all the work undertaken have been completed successfully from the supply side, and even from the demand side, by and large. Because, as in Kalchini Block, teachers, including Head Teachers, of several schools had told the evaluator during one-to-one exclusive interviews that AHEAD functionaries, especially at the ground level must stay on even after the scheduled project period is over, because though they have learnt a lot about contextually appropriate teaching-learning methods and have been applying the same in actuality, they don't feel confident enough to do the policy advocacy with the LSGI authorities' or to adopt to the changes in government education policies from time to time. In other words, there is still a gap in self-confidence among many of the teachers. Some said they have learnt alright, but not all the teachers have got the training in the activity-based learning methods or contextually appropriate pedagogic methods. In fact, these teachers did not take the training programmes as ToT (training of trainers) programmes. Nor do they consider themselves as competent trainers. This was the experience gathered from respondents from Chuapara TE school, LM Pradhan Memorial Hindi MSK, and even an otherwise impressive school like the Sarna Primary School, Mendabari. The AHEAD functionaries and decision makers have to take note of this aspect of 'psychological gap' in capacity building or empowerment initiative, though these are stray and possibly exceptional experiences of the evaluator.

The other issue is relating to the 'After School' programme. The evaluator felt that there are too few trainers as well as too few equipments and training aids to conduct the programmes more efficiently. For instance, the ratio of sewing machine to trainees is anything from 5 to even 10 in the schools mentioned in this context. The trainers have to travel long distances to cover a number of schools in distant hamlets and even across blocks, often by personal transport (bicycle) because one or two resource persons have to cover more than, say, three schools across a wide geographical area.

The local market connect has to be improved approaching and covering the government offices and government-aided schools (say, for the children's uniforms) which would make the programme viable for AHEAD and would also help in addressing some real needs of the institutions served as well as the persons involved in the programme as trainers and learners. Necessary funds have to be procured/ mobilized for the same.

Despite the challenges, the project has, by and large, achieved the results set out from the beginning – if not surpassed in respect of the project mandates on several issues. Given their capabilities as evident in most cases as narrated above, and their sincerity it is strongly believed by the evaluator that the very few challenges and shortcomings as pointed out above, will be overcome by the AHEAD Initiatives in the rest period of the present phase and the during the next phase of the project.

Annexure-1: Case Studies

1- School for Contextually Appropriate School Education

Located in a predominantly tribal people dominated village Banjamuna Prathamik Vidyalaya is a three-decade old school in a beautiful verdant ambience. AHEAD Initiatives stepped into the school in Kantabari GP under Onda Block of Bankura district in 2017 with their project interventions.

Following their involvement with the school, the teaching-learning process and method have undergone significant changes, said Prabir Kumar Pal, Head Teacher of the school. They motivated and oriented the teachers to contextualize the pedagogic methods with the natural environment, social fabric and the economic scenario of the neighborhood. The age-old cultural traditions like Adivasi dance and song, kirtan and various indigenous handicrafts, near-extinct till the other day were being infused into class room transactions. With this in mind, they have garnered the local veteran musicians, agricultural experts and other relevant people. Mr. Pal particularly mentioned the introduction of judiciously planned nutrition garden in schools, scientific methods of grafting of plants and tubers, and, above all, organization of 'Srijan Mela', a multifaceted creativity exposition fair of/ for/ by the villagers themselves under the impetus of AHEAD. More specifically, he mentioned a hands-on program marked by the slogan "*Eso shaak chini*" (*Let's get to know the spinachs*) initiated by AHEAD.

Meant for the students of classes III & IV, the program generated great enthusiasm among the large number of participants and was highly successful. Similar programs for introducing the flora, fauna and avifauna, etc. for the tender aged in schools of the area were also big successes. These programs were useful and important in more than one way for the students, most of them being first generation learners. On one hand, these helped them identify the different varieties of spinach and made them aware of the nutritional resourcefulness of their locality almost in a playful manner; on the other, they became conscious about the role and significance of spinach for their good health. A third factor is that they got to identify the seeds of different species of spinach and know how these are cultivated and nurtured so that they themselves could sustain the practice of growing the existing varieties by themselves when they grow up.

The AHEAD functionaries also introduced them to low water consuming crops and nutrition-rich vegetables like elephant foot yam (*O/*), papaya, etc and varieties of fruits like berries, pomegranate, guava and mango. While carrying out these programs, the children were oriented in introducing birds that throng around the plants, creepers, fruits and flowers and waterbodies.

Some 25 guardians (15 female and 10 male) and 26 students (male and female 13 each) attended the school during Pandemic-driven lockdown to get exposure to and learn about captive nutrition garden. Sujay Basu, SI of Onda Block (South Circle) prepared a video film about the noteworthy community involvement/ initiative during the prolonged lockdown period. He is inclined to replicate the AHEAD School Education initiatives in other schools of his circle, especially in the villages Nakaijuri and Chigani (minority-dominated), close to Banjamuna.

An unprecedented move of the AHEAD Initiatives was the "After-school Program" under which the lost or receding traditions of indigenous culture, namely, song and dance, vermicomposting, etc.

The role of the GP has been important while that of the school education department has also been encouraging although. AHEAD took both these entities on board and the SMC

(School Management Committee) along. The support of the community has also been readily available all the time.

But the Head Teacher, Mr. Pal, felt that AHEAD should be playing their catalytic role for a couple of years more to help them tide over the new Covid-driven crisis and challenges faced by the schools in his area. Because Banjamuna is one of the worst affected by the outbreak of Corona virus over the preceding two years and the subsequent floods.

2- FGD with Participants of an “After School” Programme

One late afternoon in the eve of Fall 2021, 14 women assembled in the clean courtyard of Kumiradaha Prathamik Vidyalay in the Kantabari GP of Onda South Circle Bankura district. Among them were five teenagers. Along with them were two trainers: one young man named Narayan Lohar; and a young woman, Falguni Ghosh. All of them came to share their perception and experience with the external evaluator of the project about the After School programme housed in the school premises that was initiated by AHEAD with some 16 participants in February 2017, more than four and a half years ago, i.e., two years before the Corona virus broke out. Both the trainers have been involved with the programme ever since.

‘None of the 12 trainees with whom the sewing classes started came to participate on their own had any prior training in sewing’, said Falguni, ‘but they proved themselves to be quick learners.’ Within two years all of them learnt the art of making half pant, shirt, petticoat and tapes for boys and girls. They would have learnt the trade even better and could make more varieties of items had the Pandemic not led to closure of the school and dropped a curtain on all these activities.

It was learnt from Falguni that not only did AHEAD take the initiative but also did provide the necessary funds for providing the raw materials (like threads, cloth and sewing machine, etc.) for the programme. These were distributed through the Kantabari GP authorities.

But there are some problems that need to be tackled. Marketing and sale of the finished products is a major issue. Till recently the participants of the programme were making the products for their own household consumption. Even after that some quantities of finished products have been lying unsold and unused. The Pandemic dealt a nasty blow to the production as well as marketing and sale of the products. As the school had remained closed altogether for about two years the sewing machines, some of the inputs and raw materials have been kept idle and locked up in the craft room gathering dust and moisture. This might damage the machines, the tools and the materials. That is a cause of concern. Furthermore, at least quite a few of the participants may require retraining if they forget the learnt lessons because of prolonged discontinuity shortly after conclusion of their apprenticeship period.

The already trained learners spoke in unison on being asked person-to-person that the training had been very interesting and empowering for them as it meant valuable and useful skill development. Particularly the young teenagers, like Sonali Lohar, Mandira Lohar and Riya Lohar, exuded a lot of enthusiasm when they voiced their opinion about continuation of the ‘After School’ program. All of them including the seniors, a number of them housewives, felt that one sewing machine is too few and extremely inadequate compared to the number of participants, and therefore, they all opined for making more machines available for the classes. All of them were quite happy and satisfied about the trainer Falguni Ghosh and her training. They had a very congenial relation with her, and vice versa, as was evident from discussions with the trainer as well as the trainees.

So far as the handicrafts training is concerned, the trainer, Narayan Lohar, has been doing excellent job. He is a versatile young man with multiple talents. Initially he had learnt the art of clay modelling in Bishnupur and would make idols of gods and goddesses for sale during

different festive seasons. Thereafter, he used to engage himself also in wall writing and drawing posters on a professional basis. Finally, he took institutional training in painting and 'sholapith' work from Chitrakala Art Centre, Bishnupur. Now he imparts training mainly to children and adolescents in various blocks and hamlets of Bishnupur and adjoining areas.

3- An Inception Meeting for Teachers regarding Post-Pandemic Education for Children in Schools.

On 5th August 2021, at the Nakajuri Prathamik Vidyalay, Onda Block of Bankura district, about 35 teachers assembled for an inception meeting to discuss post-Pandemic teaching-learning practices to be followed for primary school students.

After brief addresses by concerned AHEAD functionaries, Arunesh Majumdar and Swapan Das, about the background, purpose and scope of the meeting, Shri Dibyagopal Ghatak, senior Advisor AHEAD, and a member of AHEAD Think Tank, posed a few relevant and crucial questions regarding students' probable attendance in classes, teachers' initiatives and school authority's approaches to ensure the students' participation in large numbers, and probable changes in the in the teaching-learning process once the schools reopen as the Pandemic peters out after almost two long years.

Mixed responses came from the teachers regarding anticipated percentage of students dropping out temporarily or permanently for various reasons. While teachers like Partha De and Chintaharan Das put the figure at 35% to 80%, Baidyanath Ray sounded very optimistic and felt that only about 5% students may not come back to the school.

Diverse suggestions came up from the teachers regarding approaches/ strategies to bring the students back to school. Some of the major ones were: (i) Pursuing guardians to motivate their wards for resumption of studies in the school, (ii) Games and sports to be given more importance in the initial phases vis-à-vis classroom lessons, (iii) Co-curricular activities (like *krityali*, ABL, tree planting, song & dance, etc.) to be pursued more actively alongside text bookish studies, (iv) Improvement of quality of Mid-day Meal to draw the students to schools in large numbers, (v) Use of more audio-visual inputs in the teaching-learning process to make classes more attractive, and last but not the least, (vi) a greater attention on After School activities/ trainings to saddle the learning process for capacity building with greater livelihood skills. Besides, there were other important suggestions like Retrospective text-lessons and Backlog clearance, reduction of syllabus load (by the appropriate authorities) retaining the essential elements judiciously extracted, and greater thrust on Contextually Appropriate Teaching-Learning process.

Finally, Shri Dibyagopal Ghatak gave his views on the essence of the teachers' suggestions and answers to overcome the impending challenges. On his part he emphasized the following points:

- a. Curriculum (rather than Syllabus) streamlining
- b. Awakening of latent skills and dormant faculties of students
- c. AHEAD to supplement the teachers' efforts to motivate the students to engage themselves spontaneously in listening, viewing/ seeing, speaking and reading.
- d. AHEAD to assist the teachers by providing them relevant and appropriate audio-clips, audio-visual films/clips, and other pedagogic resources.
- e. Encouragement/ incorporation of physical work (labour) to be undertaken by students in the educational transaction process.

All the above to be done in consonance with the curriculum/ instructions of the West Bengal Board of Primary Education.

For the necessary Action Plan, he underlined the following points to be pursued by the teachers within the given framework:

- 'Socialising' (i.e., relating the lessons with the social aspects like)the school education system with family, neighborhood and community issues).
- 'Localising' and 'Indigenising' the school education system.
- 'Vernacularising' / 'Colloqialising' (combining inherited/ traditional knowledge and skill and communicating in a student-friendly language and idiom).
- 'Mutualising' (making the teaching-learning process as interactive as possible). It has to be an 'open' and reality-based knowledge imparting process.

Shri Ghatak concluded his presentation with concrete examples from from the story "*Satyj Sona*" drawn from one of the text books of primary classes in the interactive final session with the teachers. The active participation of the teachers in the inception meeting with candid questions, suggestions, comments and observations was very inspiring.

The aforesaid case studies highlight the role of AHEAD in facilitating the school education in a judicious, insightful, meaningful and effective manner in their project areas. The small hunch of course is why some of the recipients of their training and orientation programmes for the teaching-learning process are still not confident enough to carry on the lessons obtained in the future in a wider and deeper way as expressed in personal interviews with them. And the big challenge is to retain the momentum of progress and success achieved by AHEAD till the pre-lockdown period of the Pandemic and takes that forward in the coming days when school education gradually gets back to normalcy.

Annexure-3: Images





Annexure 4: External Evaluator



Nabinananda Sen had his studies in Rahara Ramakrishna Mission Boys' Home HSMP School, Presidency College Calcutta and the University of Calcutta. Taught Economics and Management in the post-graduate courses in Business Management of the University for about four decades (1979 -2016). Professor Sen had simultaneously served as Guest/ Visiting Faculty in various other academic institutions of repute.

He has also been involved in major positions in a large number of research projects of Government of India, Government of West Bengal, World Bank, ActionAid, Indo- Canadian Environment Facility, CUTS International, DRCSC, AICMED, etc. These were mainly regarding Monitoring and Evaluation of School Education (Primary, Upper-primary and Secondary) as well as Mid-day Meal Programme in schools of West Bengal covering all the 21 education districts in two spells for several years, Rapid Environment Impact Assessment of Minor Irrigation Schemes in West Bengal (Project ADMI), Mitigation of Arsenic Pollution and Mitigation in some districts of West Bengal, Impact of WTO on Farmers' Rights in Hindukush Himalayas, Economic Viability of Organic Farming, and so forth.

He has still been an active academic focusing mainly on regular PhD guidance and his own research activities besides some invited lectures in various institutions. The thrust areas of his teaching and research over the years has been Developmental Economics (especially on contemporary social sector issues), Environmental Management issues, Rural Marketing, etc.



Glimpses from the External Evaluation Exercise

Annexure 5:**LIST OF PUBLICATION AND VDO FROM 2019 TO 2021 (EDU)**

SI	Subject	Year
Print Material		
1	PROTHOMIK PATHAKRAM O PATHYASUCHI- CLASS I to V	2017
2	PROTHOMIK PATHAKRAM O PATHYASUCHI- CLASS V to VIII	2017
3	CHENA CHHOKE OCHENA KOTHA- 1 (CLASS III TO V)	2020
4	CHENA CHHOKE OCHENA KOTHA- 2 (CLASS III)	2020
5	CHENA CHHOKE OCHENA KOTHA- 3 (CLASS IV)	2020
6	CHENA CHHOKE OCHENA KOTHA- 4 (CLASS V)	2020
7	CHENA CHHOKE OCHENA KOTHA- 5 (CLASS VI)	2020
8	PASCHIMBANGA CHALU PATHAKRAM ANUSARE (KHASRA)	2020
9	BASTUTANTRA O GRAMIN SIKHA	2019
10	SIKHONE SCHOOL BAGAN	2019
11	SCHOOL-E PUSTI BAGAN	2021
12	TRITIO SRENIR JANYA NIRDRISTO KICHU KRITALLY	2021
13	CHOTURTHO SRENIR JANYA NIRDRISTO KICHU KRITALLY	2021
14	PANCHAM SRENIR JANYA NIRDRISTO KICHU KRITALLY	2021
15	SCHOOLE KRITALLYR THATYA PUNJI (CLASS III)	2021
16	SCHOOLE KRITALLYR THATYA PUNJI (CLASS IV)	2021
17	SCHOOLE KRITALLYR THATYA PUNJI (CLASS V)	2021
18	NABODISHA 12th	2017
19	NABODISHA 13th	2018
20	NABODISHA 14th	2018
21	NABODISHA 15th	2019
22	NABODISHA 16th	2020
23	NABODISHA 17th	2020
VDO Material		
1	JADOB AR TAR GACHER JAIGA	
2	GHOSE JAO DHUEA JAO FINAL	2018
3	GACH	2018
4	TOTA KAHINI WITH BGM MASTER	2019
5	SWARNALATA	2019
6	SEED GERMINATION	2019
7	PLANT REPRODUCTION	2019
8	ATEA AKTI KOLERA ROGER GOLPO	2019
9	ANIMAL FARM	2019
10	A STORY ABOUT NUTRITIONW	2019
11	WHERE WATER COMES PART 1	2019
12	WHERE WATER COMES PART 2	2019
13	APORICHITO	2020
14	Meena Meyera Phire Elo	2020
Teachers VDO Class-III		
1	BHALO KHAI BHALO THAKI	2021
2	BHOR	2021
3	BONDHU GACHH	2021

4	CHAAKA	2021
5	JUI PHULER RUMAL	2021
6	MAHASAGAR	2021
7	MON KEMONER GALPO	2021
8	NODIMATRIKA	2021
9	RONG SUDHU RONG	2021
10	SALOKSANGSLESH FINAL	2021
Teachers VDO Class-IV		
1	AAKASH	2021
2	AMAZON ARANYA	2021
3	AMI AAKASH	2021
4	BANDHUTWA	2021
5	BARAFER MAHADESH	2021
6	BHOOTER GOLPO	2021
7	JADU KOLSI	2021
8	KHADYA KHADAK	2021
9	PORIBESH-TOKHON EKHON	2021
10	SAJIB AJIB	2021
11	SOTYIKAARER HIRO	2021
12	UDORPURTIR ITIKOTHA	2021
Teachers VDO Class-V		
1	AMI JOL	2021
2	CHIROKALER ESHOPER GOLPO	2021
3	ESHOPER GOLPO	2021
4	JOLER AREK NAAM JIBAN	2021
5	LORAAIER UTSAB	2021
6	MASTERDA	2021
7	PARAGAYER RUJIROJGAR	2021
8	SUNDARBONER MANUSH	2021
9	UTTOKER GAAN BHAWAIYA	2021
Teachers VDO Class-VI		
1	AASHPASHER JIBBOICHITRA	2021
2	ALPO KATHAY AMBEDKAR	2021
3	BARJO ABBORJANA	2021
4	BYANGER SATHE KICHUKKHON	2021
5	DALABADDHATAR SHAKTI	2021
6	MAHAKOPI JATAK	2021
7	MRITTIKA	2021
8	PROJAPOTIR JIBANCHAKRA	2021
9	PROKRITIPREMI BISHNOI	2021
10	PROKRITIR SHILPIDER KOTHA	2021
11	RONGE RANGA ANANDA	2021
12	SMARAT ASHOK	2021
