Effective community engagement to sustain children’s learning

TaRL Conference
Johannesburg, South Africa
September 26, 2018
At Pratham

We take the proverb “it takes a village to raise a child” very seriously. Historically, our early work was driven by local communities in urban and rural areas and ever since then, community engagement has been an integral component of all our programs.

**Mobilization & raising awareness**
- Village report cards
- Community meetings
- Home visits
- Testing
- Discussions & demonstrations

**Participation to improve learning**
- Involvement in activities
- Meeting teachers
- Volunteering

**Sustainability**
- Encouraging learning at home and outside of schools
- Offering physical spaces to conduct activities
- Conducting activities with minimal Pratham support
- Taking ownership of children’s education at local level
Early childhood education & family engagement

- Genesis of Pratham endeavors – demand driven and supported by communities

- *Balwadis* / preschools are operated by local women in conveniently located spaces in the community – either a courtyard or someone’s home.

The family environment is crucial for the child’s development. Children who receive more attention and stimulation in their households tend to grasp concepts and retain them better. Hence mothers and other family members are engaged through:

- The creation of mother’s groups
- Frequent discussions on children’s progress through home visits
- Demonstration of games and activities in village meetings
- Distribution of materials to facilitate learning at home
Community mobilization in understanding the problem on the ground

• Read India is Pratham’s flagship program to improve the reading and basic math skills of children in the 6-10 age group.
• Children are grouped and taught by level rather than by grade and teaching-learning materials and activities are carried out in intensive short bursts called Learning Camps with an instructional pedagogy called CAMaL or Combined Activities for Maximized Learning. This entire methodology is Teaching at the Right Level.
Collecting information on community engagement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child name</th>
<th>Child ID</th>
<th>Contact number of the parent met (Write relation in bracket)</th>
<th>Camp 1: In your last visit to this child's home, was the parent aware of the child’s reading level? (Tally marks)</th>
<th>Yes/No</th>
<th>Camp 2</th>
<th>Camp 3</th>
<th>Last Camp: In your last visit to this child's home, was the parent aware of the child’s reading level? (Tally marks)</th>
<th>Yes/No</th>
<th>Points to be covered in a household visit</th>
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<td>1. Meet at least one of the parents. If both are not present, meet any other family member.</td>
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<td>2. Give your introduction.</td>
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<td>3. Tell about the program.</td>
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<td>4. Tell about the attendance and class performance of the child.</td>
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<td>5. Ask about the learning level of their child.</td>
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<td>6. Show the testing tools and study materials.</td>
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<td>7. Invite to the camp.</td>
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</table>
Engagement to improve learning

**Guruji Pratham Pranam**

**Objective:** Emphasize that learning happens everywhere; children’s career development.

Professionals talk to children about their jobs. Children are encouraged to ask questions and apply information to existing knowledge.

**Learning fairs/ melas**

**Objective:** Show & tell for children.

Language, math and science fairs take place periodically in the community wherein children exhibit to their parents and other villagers what they have learnt through experiments, demonstrations and performances.

**Village Education Committees**

**Objective:** Stimulate community ownership

Physical space provided by enthusiastic villagers to start a library and to provide after-school support to children. All expenses for creating and maintaining this space are borne by the community.

**Libraries**

**Objective:** Sustain gains from Learning Camps and encourage peer learning and self learning

Children’s groups meet periodically in neighborhoods outside the school setup to work on activities on their own. They are provided TLM.
Hamara Gaon – consolidation of all programs for sustainability

- Annual village report card for schooling and learning
- Mothers’ engagement through the year
- Periodic events throughout the year – fairs, projects, competitions etc.

- “Library” (community based children’s group activities) throughout the year. If tablets are available they can be included in library activities