Project Report

August 2012 – March 2016

prajayatna
We Learn. We Live

Name of the Project :

Prajayatna – a systemic approach to reforming elementary education

Location of the Project :

14 Mandals of Mahabubnagar District, Telangana

Reporting Period : Three years and eight months (August 2012 – March 2016)

Implementing organization :

Prajayatna

Duration of the Project :

2012 - 2016

Date of the Report :

15th March, 2016

Foreword

Prajayatna has been working on Educational Governance since 2000. The organization's efforts have been instrumental in bringing widespread acceptance amongst all stakeholders on the importance of community ownership in education.

Simultaneously, Prajayatna has been equally involved in addressing learning related concerns in public schools. Through a partnership with the Department of Education, Prajayatna has developed an effective approach for capability based learning that has been implemented in Government primary schools.

 Since the last few years, Prajayatna has been involved in institutionalizing its efforts by working extensively with local government bodies, community based structures and the educational bureaucracy. It has also strategically partnered with a network of organizations to ensure that key programmes are initiated in different geographical locations and scaled up in a sustainable manner. Finally, to complement these efforts, Prajayatna has been involved in guiding and influencing policy makers, training institutions and implementers through the consolidation of the experiences and learning gained from direct interventions across four States for more than a decade.

In Andhra Pradesh, Prajayatna has been working in Mahabubnagar since 2007, which post the bifurcation of Andhra Pradesh belongs to the State of Telangana. Initially the work was with 253 schools in 86 Gram Panchayats, which later on was extended to 400 schools from 2012, towards ensuring decentralized and effective governance of the schools. The learning approach to ensure capability based learning in the schools was initiated in 2015.

The project in partnership with Ernst and Young Foundation was initiated in 2012 to extend and streamline the work of Prajayatna in the context of education governance in Telangana. Through its key interventions, Prajayatna has been able to bring about substantial developments in the schools belonging to select working Mandals. These developments have been enabled through key community based structures – the school committees that comprise of parents and the local government bodies. Simultaneously, extensive efforts have been made to develop the capabilities of these institutional structures such that the interventions to support the development of education are sustained even without the support of external agencies.

in its working Mandals, Prajayatna has been able to address basic and essential requirements such as amenities in schools, regular attendance of teachers and students, formation of key structures in schools and Gram Panchayats; ability to mobilise resources, enhance community involvement in the learning process of the children, etc. it has also moved forward to address quality in learning by initiating its learning approach – Kalikayatna in one cluster of schools in Mahabubnagar. The educational governance work carried out in the previous years in this District has been supportive in initiating the learning approach as it has given Prajayatna a keen understanding of the local context and supported in developing strong relationships with the educational bureaucracy and the local community.

Introduction

This project was initiated in 2012, reaching out to schools in 14 Mandals of Mahabubnagar District 400 and 166 Gram Panchayats .

Prajayatna had initiated this project with the intention of developing a more effective strategy for decentralized educational governance and to consolidate its prior experiences such that the Governance initiatives can be carried forward in a sustainable manner and Prajayatna is able to impact policies in the context of bringing about a decentralised form of education governance and continue with interventions that strengthen structures.

Scope of work

This project was operational for three years starting from August 2012, which was then extended to March 2016. It was implemented in 14 Mandals of Mahabubnagar District, reaching out initially to 400 schools across 166 Gram Panchayats. Over the three years of project implementation, several schools were closed down due to a decision taken by the Government to close schools with extremely low enrollments. In the final year of working, in the 166 Gram Panchayats where the project was operational, there were a total of 374 schools.

Background of Mahabubnagar District

Mahabubnagar is one of the Districts belonging to the recently created state of Telangana. Mahabubnagar was historically known as Rukmammapet and Palamoor. The name was later changed to Mahabubnagar, in honour of the late Nizam of Hyderabad. The District has a total of 1347 Gram Panchayats in 64 Mandals with a total population of 4,042,191 (as per the 2011 census) and the primary languages spoken are Telugu, Urdu, and Hindi.

Mahabubnagar is one of the most backward Districts in the country. The literacy rate in the District is only 56.06% which is much lower than the national literacy rate of 74.04% (as per 2011 census). In 2006, the Indian Government had identified some of the most backward districts in order to address development by providing a special grant to these Districts. Mahabubnagar is currently one of the 9 districts in Telangana currently receiving funds from the Backward Regions Grant Fund Programme (BRGF).

Key interventions

Prajayatna has been strategically involved in ensuring that the key stakeholders are involved in the process of school development and in ensuring that the capabilities of key structures representing the communities are developed so that they can carry out their roles and responsibilities in an effective and transparent manner.

❖ **Community level processes**

◆ **Local Education and Governance Data (LEGD) process**

● Prajayatna initiated the LEGD processes where both local educational context and basic governance related information is collected from the Government schools in the working area. This is in order to have a clear understanding of the local context of both the schools and the village or ward where the school is located.

● The data collected includes information related to - infrastructure, teachers, teaching and learning materials, teaching methodology, information of School Management Committees and Gram Panchayat, participation of community based structures in school, etc.

● School information which on being provided to the stakeholders has been a tool to initiate dialogues and also support the decision making process at the school level.

● The information collected from the LEGD has created an awareness of the local educational situation amongst the large community.

● It has supported in assessing enrollment and attendance and has facilitated long term planning based on student enrollment data.

● This consolidated information has especially been useful to the Gram Panchayats and the functionaries of the Department of Education/Department of Panchayat Raj. It has helped them to review the decisions taken and plans made based on the information available with the Department of Education.

- The information from the LEGD has been a baseline for Prajayatna which in turn has helped in tracking the progress of the schools.
- The information from the LEGD has been used by the Department of Education for the preparation of its annual action plans.
- The LEGD has supported in the preparation of education plans at different levels (school, Gram Panchayat, Block and District).
- It has supported in assessing the situation regarding the formation of school and Gram Panchayat structures that are directly responsible for the management of schools.

The details of number of LEGD collected

2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
892	736	736

Vidya Gram Sabha and Follow up meetings

The Vidya Gram Sabha is a village-level meeting on education involving parents, Gram Panchayat members, teachers, representatives of women and youth groups and community members. All the stakeholders come together to collectively discuss and decide matters concerning their local school. This is a core process of Prajayatna and it is the initial intervention that is conducted in the school. The information that is collected through the Local Education Governance Data process is presented in the Vidya Gram Sabha to all the stakeholders that are present in the meeting. The current situation of the school is presented to all participants and discussions to address critical areas of concerns are facilitated in this meeting, allowing all stakeholders to discuss their concerns and take responsibility for addressing identified issues.

A key outcome of this meeting is the school development plan that is prepared through the contribution of all stakeholders. On completion of the Vidya Gram Sabhas, school level follow up meetings are organized with the School Management Committees (SMCs) at regular intervals to review the progress of implementation of the plans made during the Vidya Gram Sabha. These interventions have also been supportive to review and support the development of the SMCs capabilities.

❖ **Processes to address institutional capability development of structures and other key functionaries**

● **GP Network Meeting and follow up meetings**

In the Gram Panchayat level Network meetings, the School Management Committees (SMCs) of all schools in a Gram Panchayat , come together at the Panchayat level to discuss common concerns and to highlight important developments that have taken place in individual schools. This key process support the SMC members to develop their capabilities by providing them with sufficient exposure and the opportunity to understand different possibilities and alternative ideas to address problems that they confront. These meetings have also supported in building a relationship between the SMCs and the Gram Panchayat members and have contributed to the development of Gram Panchayat level Education Plans. It has supported in eliciting the involvement and support of the Gram Panchayats in the process of education development.

Prajayatna has also conducted key interventions to develop the capabilities of Structures that represent committees such as the Functional Committees that are responsible for education at the Gram Panchayat and Mandal level. Some of the important interventions conducted with this objective are: Mandal level education committee meetings and Mandal level workshops

Capability development interventions have also been organized for key functionaries such as: teachers, Complex Resource Persons, Mandal Education Officers, Presidents and Secretaries of the Gram Panchayats.

Key processes conducted during the project period:

Intervention	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015 (Till February, 2016)
Vidya Gram Sabha	157	104	90
Follow up of Vidya Gram Sabha	239	244	252
GP Network Meeting	14	86	16
Follow up meeting of GP Network		6	142
Mandal level education committee meetings		5	9
Mandal level workshops [GP Presidents]		7	7
Mandal level teachers workshops		9	15
Mandal level MMS Meeting		4	17
Mandal level MPTCs workshop		5	9
Mandal level SMC Training Programmes	5	9	
Local Learning Resource Programmes		56	120
District level meetings		5	14

The key process of Prajayatna has reached out to the following stakeholders

Participants	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015 (Till February, 2016)
SMC (parents)	4771	1940	3441
SMC (nominated)	323	492	454
Anganwadi Representatives	535	268	602
Teachers	1010	471	973
GP elected Representativess	758	608	1511
TP/ZP elected Representatives	139	64	53
Education dept	64	88	216
WCD Dept	385	63	84
PRI Dept	18	19	44
Parents	2405	1708	3595
Local Org. (SHG/VO/YO)	123	212	268
Others	1325	1025	1930
Total	**11856**	**6958**	**13171**

Key Impact

Through the interventions at different levels, Prajayatna has been able to impact critical aspects of educational governance. The key aspects that the project has been able to impact are:

- Prajayatna has facilitated community involvement in the process of education development. Through interventions initiated by Prajayatna it has been possible to ensure unprecedented participation of parents, community members and community representatives. Substantial developments have been facilitated by the involvement of these key stakeholders.

- The formation of institutional structures representing the community at the school and at the Gram Panchayat have been possible across the working Mandals. It has been possible to ensure the formation of these structures in a democratic manner.

- It has been possible to develop credibility for the School Management Committees (SMCs) among all stakeholders. Prior to Prajayatna's interventions, the SMCs were not given adequate recognition that such an institution merits.

- Prajayatna has attempted to develop the institutional capabilities of key structures representing communities. The activation of these structures has enabled to prepare and implement school development plans resulting in improved school facilities and better learning environments for the children. Communities and representative structures have mobilized resources required for schools from different stakeholders and ensured effective allocation of existing funds and utilization of Government plans and schemes.

- Education has become an important agenda amongst communities and the local Government bodies, especially the Gram Panchayats. This has been demonstrated through the increase in discussions on education in official meetings such as the General Body meetings, increase in financial allocation for Education by the Panchayats, and finally more developments in schools that have taken place through the Panchayats.

- Key interventions has focused on inculcating specific practices and through attempts to institutionalize these practices, Prajayatna has been able to bring about better transparency and accountability in educational governance.

- Prajayatna has facilitated the involvement of parents, community members and even elected representatives in the process of observing, understanding and getting involved with their children's learning. Several innovative processes have been introduced and adopted to ensure the gradual involvement of a largely illiterate populace with the learning process taking place in schools.

- Substantial efforts have gone into strengthening and developing institutional capabilities of existing and legitimate structures such that it ensures the long term sustainability of key initiatives towards the development of education.

Description of impact that have been enabled through Prajayatna's interventions

Towards the end of the project period in the year 2015-16, Prajayatna had conducted an extensive survey, collecting information from all working schools and Gram Panchayats to understand the impact that has been possible through the interventions that have been carried out in the project period. The data presented below shows the quantitative details of some of the important developments that have been facilitated by Prajayatna. Several improvements can be seen in critical areas related to the functioning of structures which has in turn led to various improvements that can be seen in the schools in Prajayatna's working area.

Formation of structures

From the initiation of the project, Prajayatna has ensured that the key structures that represent the local communities in the school have been formed in all in our working areas. Similarly, the Functional committees at the Gram Panchayat that is responsible for education has been formed in those Gram Panchayats in which Prajayatna has been operational. Through different interventions, Prajayatna has ensured that these basic structures that are necessary to ensure the development of education have been formed in a democratic manner and all required procedures mentioned in the applicable bylaws have been followed.

Prior to the initial year when these committees have been formed, in the following years, Prajayatna has ensured that the committees are reconstituted again on expiry of their terms.

Formation of school committees

Year	Number of schools where SMCs were formed and reconstituted
2012-13	268
2014-15	402

Out of these in 367 schools the SMC were newly constituted by following all procedures mentioned in the bylaws including organizing of parents meeting for the formation of SMCs.

Formation of Functional Committee in the Gram Panchayat

Out of the total 166 Gram Panchayats, in 159 Gram Panchayats the Functional committee that is responsible for education has been formed with Prajayatna's support.

Year	Number of Functional Committees formed
2012-13	41
2013-14	50
2014-15	68
Total	**159**

In fifty Gram Panchayats the Functional Committees have been formed by following all applicable procedure as mentioned in the Bylaws

Institutionalization of structures

Initially it was found that even where the SMCs and the Functional Committees were formed, the members were not aware of their roles and responsibilities and in some cases few of the members were not even aware that they were a part of the respective committee.

Prajayatna has conducted several School and GP level processes to ensure that these structures are not only oriented with their basic roles and responsibilities but also work on school development through the preparation of plans, regular reviews of progress and monitoring of implementation.

Prajayatna has also ensured that basic processes such as conducting regular meetings of these committees, maintenance of minutes, maintenance of quorum and other basic procedures required to ensure that the Committees can function effectively have been ensured. Over the years it has been seen that the committees have been functioning more efficiently as can be seen by the number of meetings conducted.

In addition to the SMCs and the Education Functional Committee at the Gram Panchayat, Prajayatna has also supported the parents in school to get involved and contribute by meeting regularly and supporting the SMC members.

Regular meetings of key structures

Year	Number of GPs where meetings with quorum have been conducted
2012-13	67
2013-14	39
2014-15	57
Total	163

Year	Number of SMC meetings conducted
2012-13	1865
2013-14	2327
2014-15	2432

Year	Number of Parents meetings conducted
2012-13	1524
2013-14	1881
2014-15	1920

Year	Number of GPs which have conducted meetings with minutes
2012-13	57
2013-14	41
2014-15	62
Total	160

Year	Number of SMC meetings with minutes
2012-13	1833
2013-14	2268
2014-15	2314

Year	Number of parents meetings with minutes
2012-13	1462
2013-14	1785
2014-15	1799

It can be seen from the above tables that the both at the GP and at the school level the key structures have been supported to conduct more regular meetings and essential requirements to ensure democratic participation and to encourage transparency have been ensured. Procedures such as maintenance of minutes an ensuring that a quorum is present to conduct meetings have been increasingly followed.

Critical aspects related to meetings conducted

Year	Number of GPs where school plans have been discussed in the meetings
2012-13	49
2013-14	40
2014-15	65
Total	**154**

In order to encourage accountability, the GP Functional Committees and the SMCs have been encouraged to follow certain practices. The SMCs for example have been encouraged to share the minutes of all their meetings with the Gram Panchayat Functional committees to ensure that the GP members are aware of the issues faced by schools. The GP members are also encouraged to discuss educational concerns and the school development plans that have been shared by the SMCs in their meetings.

Since the Gram Panchayat members have traditionally not been involved with educational concerns, Prajayatna has encouraged the GPs to get more involved with schools in their Panchayat. The GP members have been supported to visit schools, attend SMC meetings and also support in various school development initiatives.

Functioning of GP members with respect to educational concerns

Year	Gps that have participated in SMC meetings
2012-13	104
2013-14	120
2014-15	155

Year	Gps where members have visited schools
2012-13	86
2013-14	107
2014-15	146

Year	Number of GPs that have supported SMCs in school development work
2012-13	71
2013-14	103
2014-15	146

❖ **Educational planning**

Gram Panchayat Educational Plans

- 162 Gram Panchayats have made Panchayat level educational plans.

- 153 Gram Panchayats have collected schools plans of all schools in their Panchayat.

- 139 Gram Panchayats have made GP level plans by having joint meetings of the Gram Panchayat and school committee

School level planning

Year	Number of schools were plans were made
2012-13	142
2013-14	351
2014-15	356

Year	Number of schools were plans were made by teachers & SMC jointly
2012-13	196
2013-14	287
2014-15	313

Impact through the effective functioning of the structures

In 2013, the people's movement for the creation of a new state of Telangana had delayed the elections of the Gram Panchayats due to which they were in a suspended state. As a result of this, not much work could be done with the elected structures, due to which impact cannot be seen. In 2013-14 after the election and formation of the Panchayats, Prajayatna was able to work intensively with these structures - SMCs, Gram Panchayat and Mandal Panchayats. The difference in impact can be visibly seen here. In 2013-14 School Development Plans were created at the school level, which was then consolidated by the Gram Panchayat based on which their plans were made. These plans were also shared with the Department of Education which supported the formation of their education micro plan. This led to many of the needs of the schools being fulfilled in the 2014-15.

Infrastructure - basic amenities to ensure learning environment for children

Enabling proper planning at school and Gram Panchayat levels, and through interventions that have supported these structures to regularly review the status of implementation through the involvement of key stakeholders, has led to a scenario where many of the essential requirements of the schools have been addressed. Both the Gram Panchayats and school committees have directly contributed to school development, have mobilized resources from other stakeholders and have also ensured the effective allocation of funds available with concerned Departments. The members of these structures have also been actively involved in monitoring of works and reviewing the development plans made These activities have ensured that school requirements have been met in several schools across the working Mandals.

| Aspects	Amount (Rs.)
Class Rooms	96,999,169
Compound	9,970,117
Electricity	4,92,128
Furnitures	6,52,952
Ground Levelling	3,52,300
Kitchen Room	11,265,100
Land Procurement	4,97,000
Land Registration	8,000
Learning Materials	6,65,370
Repair of doors and windows	2,60,255
Sports Materials	6,09,320
Toilet	24,206,600
Water	6,090,400
Painting	1,928,350
Total	**15,39,97,061**

Various important school requirements for which financial resources have been allocated from different stakeholders during the period of the project duration with the amount for each aspect has been given in the table.

It can be seen that more than 15 crores have been mobilised to fulfill the needs of the schools. The break up of the mobilisation is given below.
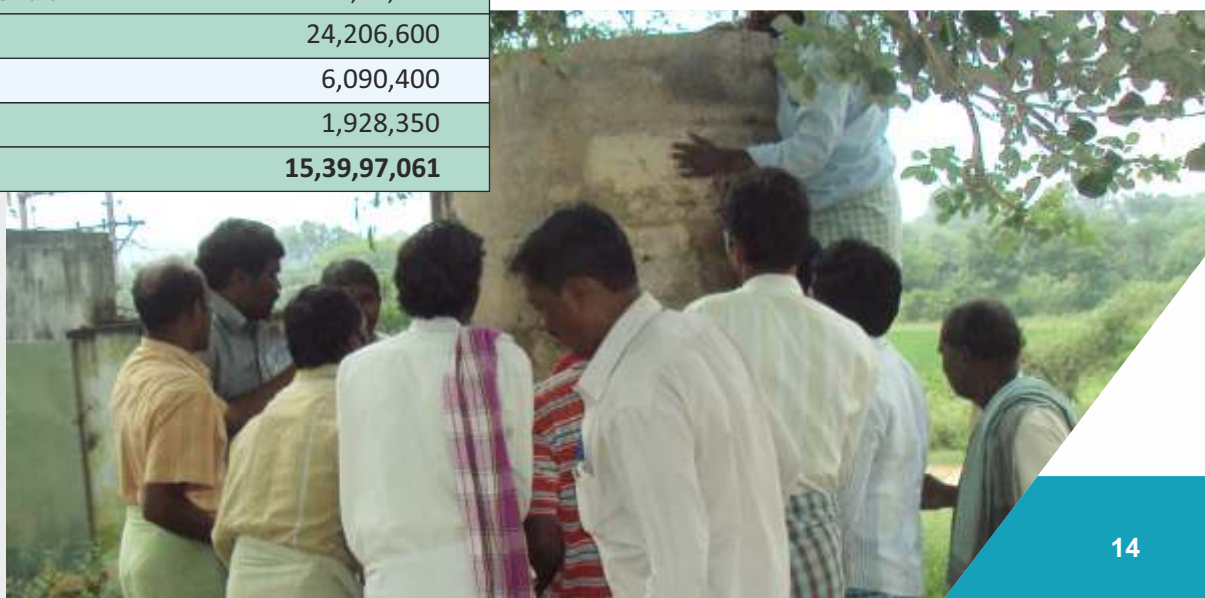
The break up of the allocations made to schools has been given according to the stakeholders who have made the allocation, with the year in which the allocation was made.

| Stakeholders	2013	2014	2015 (Till February, 2016)	Total
Community	15,200	1,05,170	10,600	1,30,970
Donors	6,44,000	10,36,902	2,72,350	19,53,252
EGS	2,45,500	11,49,600	2,37,500	16,32,600
Gram Panchayat	923,900	493,200	144,000	1,561,100
Mandal Parishad	801,000	101,200	670,000	1,572,200
Zilla Parishad	375,000	495,000	5,20,000	1,390,000
NPEGL	22,000	3,500		25,500
PRI Dept	23,59,400	17,79,500	2,60,800	43,99,700
RVM	5,26,96,712	75864227	12768800	141329739
SC,ST SUBPLAN	2,000			2,000
Total	**58,084,712**	**81,028,299**	**14,884,050**	**153,997,061**
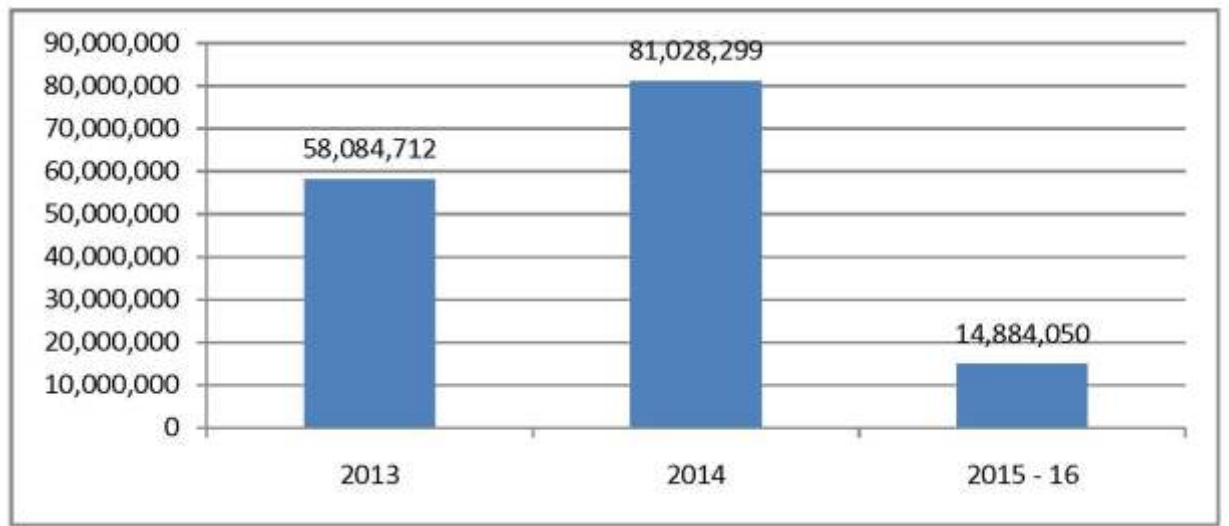
Other aspects to enhance overall quality of school/education

Besides the stakeholders addressing basic school infrastructure requirements, schools have been supported through the community based structures to address other essential aspects of school developments such as increasing enrollments, improving attendance to schools, addressing teacher requirements, addressing learning needs, etc.

Enrollment and retention

Through different interventions carried out by key stakeholders, especially the Gram Panchayats, the enrollment and attendance in school has progressively increased across the years.
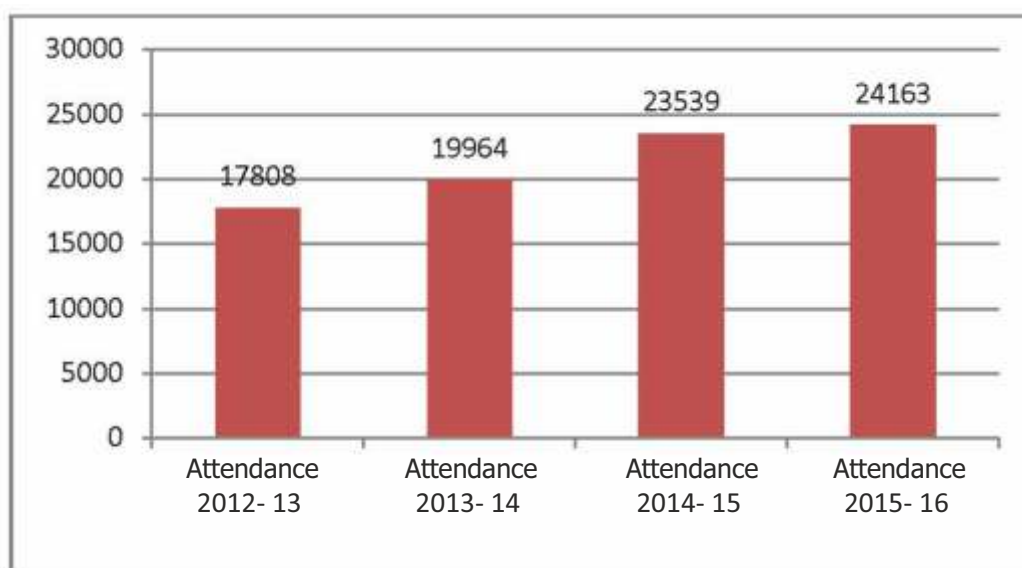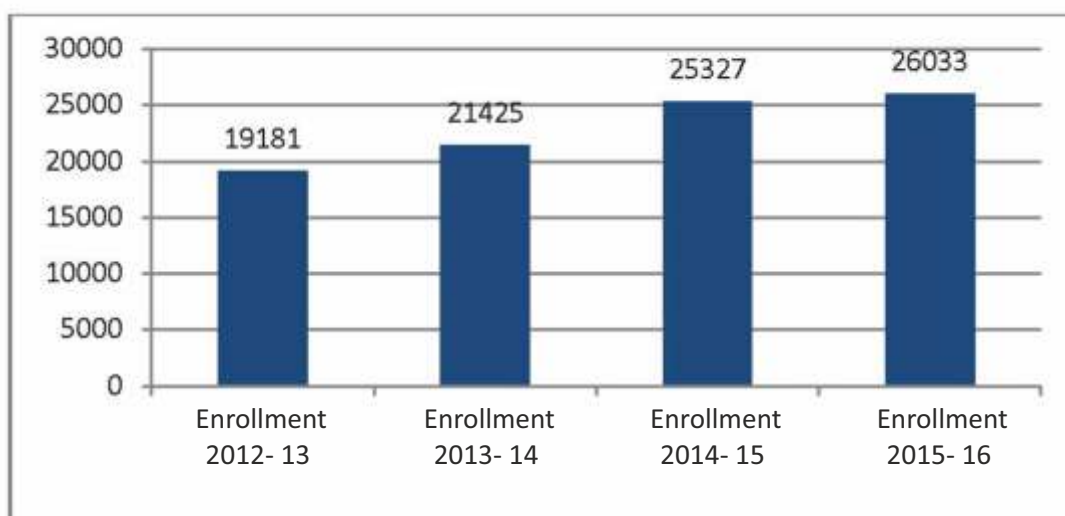
Through specific interventions organized by SMC members, it has been possible to identify children who have dropped out of schools and efforts have been made to enrol them back to school. Out of the 2231 children identified as dropped out of school, 1255 children have been admitted back to school.

More than half of the children (56%) have been enrolled. The children who could not be enrolled were those who were older.
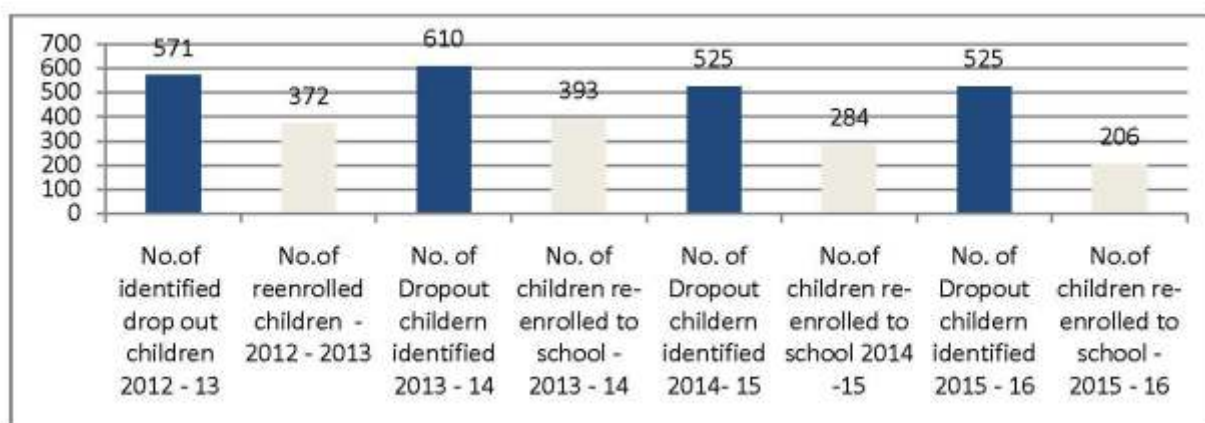
In addition to the efforts of the SMCs, the Gram Panchayats have also conducted several interventions to re-enroll children who have dropped out of school. 569 children have been re-enroled by GP members in the year 2013 - 14 and in 2014-15, 766 children were re-enroled. In the project period, a total of 1335 children have been through the efforts of the Gram Panchayat members.

Some of the key strategies and activities employed to address the issue of children dropping out have been:

Discussions conducted in village and Panchayat level community meetings, identification and preparation of database of children who have dropped out of school, home visits, discussions conducted in parents and SMC meetings, providing incentives, informing parents of facilities available in schools, ensuring enrollment of anganwadi children to schools, teachers alongwith the SMCs enrolling the support of the Police and Labour Department in ensuring that children were enrolled to school and not work, organizing enrollment camps.

Impact on learning

Besides ensuring basic amenities and a good learning environment in schools, Prajayatna has also through its key processes ensured that more concerns directly connected to learning in schools have been addressed. Concerns such as teacher shortage, lack of learning materials, enhancing learning within classrooms through innovative methods, supporting comprehensive and ongoing evaluation processes, have been addressed through the involvement of community members, parents, teachers, Department of Education and the key structures.

One of the important contributions of the community level processes has been the substantial improvement in teacher accountability that has been made possible through increased interactions between parents, SMC and GP members with teachers. Not only has this contributed in increasing teacher accountability but it has also enabled key stakeholders to understand concerns faced by teachers and support them in carrying out their responsibilities.

Addressing teacher requirements

Teacher appointments have been made possible through the concerted efforts of the SMC members and other key stakeholders.

Year	Number of schools where new teachers have been appointed
2012-13	3
2013-14	1
2014-15	8

Vidya Volunteers

Teachers have been appointed through the SSA. In addition to the appointment of new teachers, in several schools where there was a shortage of teachers, Vidya volunteers have been appointed and salaries for them have been paid through the contributions made by different stakeholders.

Year	Number of Vidya Volunteers appointed
2012-13	8
2013-14	19
2014-15	5

The breakup of amount from different stakeholders is given below:

Stakeholder	Amount Mobilized (Rs.)
GP	72,000
RVM	15,44,000
Donors	1,20,000

A total amount of Rs. 1736000 has been mobilized by different stakeholders to pay for the remuneration of Vidya Volunteers.

Effective learning process

Prajayatna believes that learning is organic and one learns from one's environment through experiences and school should be a place where children are given exposure and opportunities to experience and thereby learn. Learning needs to be more contextual and experiential and children made to learn more from what is around the school as suggested in the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) rather than solely depend on what is in the text books. Various workshops have been held with the teachers in order to get them to discuss how children learn, understand the NCF and RTE, different ways of assessment, experiential learning etc. In several schools, Prajayatna has supported teachers, SMC members and community members to identify and make use of local resources – either places of interest or resource persons from the surrounding villages to add value to the existing lessons that are conducted in the classrooms. This supports children in relating to the concepts in a better manner and makes their daily classes more interesting and practical. Across the working Mandals, teachers in several schools have organized trips for children to nearby places and have brought resource persons to the school to enhance specific areas of learning. The community members have been involved in the identification and at times come as resource persons or else support the teachers. In addition to using local resources, teachers have also been encouraged to organize project works and other activity based learning methods for children. This has shown an increase in the interest of the children and the overall learning levels.

In the Upper Primary School in Chengonapalli of Gadwal Mandal, the teachers had organized a trip for the children of Std 3 and 4 to the local Primary Health Centre (PHC). Since the children in these classes had lessons related to heath, this visit was planned in order to improve their understanding of the subject.

In the PHC, the children were allowed to have a detailed discussion with Dr. Janardhan Reddy. Since the teachers had obtained prior permission, the doctor had made himself free to interact with the children and clarify their doubts. The children were given a guided tour around the hospital and different areas and their functioning was explained to them. The teacher alongwith the children interacted with the doctor. Aspects relating to general health, nutrition and cleanliness were explained by the doctor. First aid administration and contents that need to be maintained in the first aid box in the school was discussed with the children. Preventive measures that need to be observed for avoiding common diseases were also discussed.

Post the visit; children had another round of discussions with the teachers to recall their experiences and learnings from them. Each child then made a report of the visit which was added to their individual portfolios and this has been added to their learning portfolios.

Activity	No. of Instances
Through Project Work 2012 - 13	1302
Through Project Work 2013 -14	1790
Through Project Work 2014- 15	2143
Through Project Work 2015 -16	1625

Visit local institutions, historical place etc 2012 - 13	865
Visit local institutions, historical place etc 2013 -14	1207
Visit local institutions, historical place etc 2014 -15	1498
Visit local institutions, historical place etc 2015 -16	1176

Resource person visit to school 2012 - 13	487
Resource person visit to school 2013 -14	642
Resource person visit to school 2014 -15	784
Resource person visit to school 2015 -16	675

Provision of files for learning portfolios

Children in most of the working schools have been provided with files to maintain comprehensive learning portfolios. These learning files have been mobilized by the support of different stakeholders. The table below gives details of amount mobilized from different stakeholders across the three years for the purchase of these files.

Stakeholders	2013	2014	2015	2016
Head teacher	160	2,175		
SSA		550		
Teachers	500	500		500
Parents		3,405		
Donors	1,500	9,460	3,14,000	14,930
Total	**2,460**	**16,090**	**3,14,000**	**14,430**

Status of Learning levels in children

In the year 2014-15, Prajayatna had collected the learning level of children in grade 5 belonging to all 374 schools in the working areas of Mahabubnagar. Children in all schools have been assessed by the teacher and grades have been given according to the guidelines provided by the Department of Education. The following table shows number of children in the different grades. It can be seen that 37.72% of the children are in A and A+ grades.

	Number of students	% of students
Class 5 2014-15 A+	406	11.47
Class 5 2014-15 A	929	26.25
Class 5 2014-15 B+	1150	32.50
Class 5 2014-15 B	664	18.76
Class 5 2014-15 C	390	11.02

In the three years of project implementation period, six schools have been upgraded from lower primary school to Upper Primary school based on the requirement in the villages due to the distance and accessability. The upgrading of schools has been carried out with the permission obtained from either the District Education Officer or through the State level officers due to the efforts made by the SMC members and teachers to upgrade the schools. This involved a lot of efforts by the community in order to follow up with the matter and get it sanctioned.

Few examples of development seen in schools

Lower Primary School - Gurmgadda, Gadwal Mandal

Gurmgadda village of Gadwal Mandal is located near the Krishna River. The village is at a distance of 26 kms from the Mandal and 126 kms from the District head quarters of Mahabubnagar. The village is not accessible by road and can be reached only by boat through the river. This village belongs to the Gurmgadda Gram Panchayat, which consists of only this one village.

The village has a total of 165 families with a total population of 1195. There are more than 125 children in the age group of 6 to 14 years. The village has one primary school with a total enrollment of 47 children with the remaining children going to the Government UPS and nearby private schools.

On the 19th of June 2014, Prajayatna had conducted a Vidya Gram Sabha in this village. In the meeting, the issue of the village not having an anganwadi and the single primary school in the village not having any teachers was taken up very seriously by all. The single teacher who was sanctioned for the school had gone on deputation and the school was managing with the support of Vidya volunteers. Since the village was difficult to reach and the vidya volunteer who was coming from another village was also not keen on coming to the school regularly. None of the officials from the Department of Education had visited the school and though there was a School Management Committee, it had not been formed according to the prescribed procedure.

Since the parents, SMC president and GP members were present in the meeting, all issues faced by the school was discussed which included requirements of basic infrastructure, lack of teachers, formation of as proper SMC and low enrollments. The construction of one of the classrooms was incomplete and there was no toilet facility in the school. Several other repairs were also required.

In the meeting it was also realised that the Functional committee responsible for Education within the Gram Panchayat had not been formed. Since the Panchayat Sarpanch and members were present in the meeting it was decided to form this committee at the earliest. It was also decided that a school level meeting would be organized at the earliest with all parents attending so that the School Management Committee could be formed according to the required democratic procedure.

In the meeting, it was discussed that 7 children had dropped out of school recently and it was decided that these children needed to be enrolled back to school. The Gram Panchayat ward member Nageshwar Reddy took the responsibility of enrolling these children. It was also decided in the meeting that the Mandal Education Officer would be approached at the earliest to request for a permanent teacher to be sanctioned for the school.

A survey of children in the age group of 0 to 6 yrs had to be conducted so that a decision on initiating an anganwadi could be taken. It was discussed that the survey data would be presented to the Child Development Programme Officer.

Both the Gram Panchayat Functional Committee and the School Management Committee have since then been formed and Prajayatna has supported them by organising trainings for them to orient these committees of their roles and responsibilities, planning, resource mobilisation, etc. These structures have already begun to work on addressing school requirements and work on many of the activities that was planned in the Vidya Gram Sabha.

Government Primary School, Burugupalli, Jedcharala Mandal

Burugupalli is located at a distance of 10 km from the Mandal headquarters of Jedcharala and 30 km from the District headquarter of Mahabubnagar. Burugupalli Gram Panchayat comprise of 4 villages out of which only two have schools. The Panchayat has 530 families with a total population of around 4000. Most of the population are engaged with agriculture and the main crops grown are cotton, maize, groundnut and paddy. The Gram Panchayat has most of the basic amenities such as diary, primary health care centre and a veterinary hospital and there are a total of 3 anganwadis in the Panchayat.

The primary school in Burugupalli initially had several infrastructural issues and the attendance in the school was very poor. Although the school had a total enrollment of 115 children, it was seen that only 70 children attended school regularly. Similarly, the anganwadi in the village also had poor attendance with only around 50 students of the total 81 student attending regularly.

Prajayatna had conducted a Vidya Gram Sabha in the year 2012-13. In the meeting where most of the SMC members, teachers, anaganwadi teachers, department officials and community members had participated, the situation of the school was assessed and a plan to address them was prepared.

It was seen that the school did not have sufficient learning materials, drinking water supply was not available, and the compound wall was not completed. The school development plan made mainly focused on increasing enrollment of children and addressing the basic infrastructural requirement.

Post the school level meeting, Prajayatna has conducted five follow up meetings where the School committee members and teachers had been supported to implement the plans made. Prajayatna has also conducted a network meeting at Gram Panchayat level and the teachers in the school have benefitted from the Mandal level workshops conducted by Prajayatna.

Prajayatna has ensured the regular formation of the School committee according to the applicable bylaws. The SMC has been supported to address most of the basic school requirements. The SMC chairman Ramcharan had ensured that the necessary repairs were conducted for providing drinking water. This was completed by utilizing the available school grant. The school grants were also utilized to repair the windows in the classrooms.

To increase the enrollment in the school, the SMC members along with the Gram Panchayat members and the Mandal Panchayat member conducted an enrollment campaign by visiting all the households of the children and convincing parents to send their children to school. Twenty children who had dropped out of school were re-enrolled and an additional twenty children were enrolled.

Once the strength of the school had increased it was realized that an additional toilet was required for the school. Through the initiative of the Gram Panchayat Sarpanch, Sreenu Naik, an additional toilet was constructed at a cost of Rs. 70,000 that was provided by the RWS –Rural Water Supply

The playground in the school could not be used as it required leveling in order to enable the children to play freely and without any hindrance. The Gram Panchayat Vice President took the responsibility for ensuring the leveling of the ground and using funds and labour through the MNREGA - Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Program and through the

support of the local youth groups, the work was completed and the playground is now being used.

Through the support of the Gram Panchayat, the compound wall in the school was completed. The funds required for the completion of the work was provided from the taxes collected by the Gram Panchayat. A government order passed by the Telangana government, allowed the Gram Panchayat to collect taxes and utilize the amount for development works within the Panchayat.

The teachers in the school have been supported through various interventions and workshops to address learning concerns in the school.

The children in the school have been taken to a local provision shop to enable them to understand better the maths lessons that were being taught in class.

To record the progress in children's learning, files and papers were procured to maintain the learning portfolio of each child. An amount of Rs. 11320 was provided by Krishnaiah and Jahangir who were GP ward members to purchase files and papers.

The Ex Sarpanch of the Gram Panchayat - Narshima Reddy provided a CD player for the school since there were several learning CDs available in school that were not being utilized.

One of the residents of the village, who was working with the Department of Forests, ensured that the saplings were provided and a school garden made.

The school now has most of the basic amenities and both the teachers and the school management is seen to be working actively towards addressing the learning needs of the schools. A need to upgrade the school to an upper primary school has been identified and shared with concerned officials.

Upper Primary School Chowdhrapalli, Talkondapalli Mandal

The upper primary school in Chowdrapalli initially had a strength of 70 children with two teachers. The two classrooms in the school were extremely congested and required repairs. During the rains, the classrooms leaked and classes were conducted in the community hall. The school also did not have proper drinking water facilities.

Chowdhrapalli is located in Talkondapalli Mandal at a distance of 52 kms from Mahabubnagar.

When Prajayatna had conducted a Vidya Gram Sabha which was attended by the teachers, SMC members and community members, some of the major issues discussed was the lack of basic facilities, the need for an additional classroom and the need for allocating land to construct additional rooms , high level of drop outs and poor enrollment in the school. It was recognized that if basic infrastructure could be addressed urgently most of the drop outs could be enrolled back to school through the parents and the commnunity.

A community meeting was organized to discuss and identify land that could be handed over to the school for constructing additional classrooms. Since the school was located at the centre of the village there was no free place

available. Alternatively, Government land was identified on the outskirts of the village and this was handed over to the school. Further to this, a grant of Rs 17 lakhs was allocated and using this fund, 4 new classrooms was constructed on this land. The ex Sarpanch and Vice Sarpanch of the Panchayat – Mallama and Bala Maisiaha and one of the elder members of the community Sri. Ramchandra Reddy worked extensively for coordinating with the concerned officials for allocating land and building the classrooms.

Through the RWS, a bore well has been provided and water tanks have been provided at a cost of Rs 40,000. Repairs of existing water tanks have also been conducted. A toilet for girls was separately constructed for girls at a cost of Rs 70,000. The old school building was painted and repairs were conducted through a contribution of Rs 7000 from community members.

Once the basic requirements were addressed, an enrollment campaign was conducted by organizing a house to house visit where the SMC members, teachers and GP members requested parents to enroll their children to the school. 17 new children were enrolled to the school through this campaign. The SMC vice president Sriramulu and the Head teacher Mallaiah were the most active campaigners.

The school had requested the department to sanction permission to start classes for std 8 grade within the school due to the distance of the UPS from the school. Since there were less than 20 children in the std 7 class, permission was not granted. To address this requirement, community members along with the teachers enrolled 6 new children thereby increasing the enrolment. Subsequently permission was granted to start std 8 grade classes in the school and a request to appoint an additional teacher was also made. As a temporary arrangement, two vidya volunteers were organized by Ramchandra Redddy, a senior citizen of the community.

The SMCs now meet regularly and have started working actively. They have addressed several management concerns such as issues with the administration of mid day meals etc.

School development that has been enabled through the Gram Panchayats

Santhapura Gram Panchayat

Santhapura Gram Panchayat belongs to Keshampete Mandal of Mahabubnagar. The Panchayat is located at a distance of 8 km from the Mandal and 78 kms from District headquarters. The panchayat comprises of mainly an agrarian community and some of the most common crops grown are cotton, pulses, vegetables and fruits. This Gram Panchayat has two Government primary schools and three anganwadis within its purview. A total of 105 children are enrolled in these schools and there are a total of 3 teachers who are assisted by three vidya volunteers

Prajayatna has over the years organized several interventions with the intention of developing the schools. Various processes have been conducted over the years with the intention of building the institutional capabilities of all the stakeholders thereby developing the schools. The various interventions organized have been attended by the SMC members, teachers, Sarpanch and other members of the Gram Panchayat, Secretary of GP, anganwadi teachers, and community members.

Some of the major concerns seen in the initial stages of the intervention was the need to address basic infrastructure, form basic structures such as Functional committees for the Gram Panchayat and the school management committees, and to improve enrollment in both the schools.

Prajayatna had initially ensured the formation of the school committee and the Functional Committee of the Gram Panchayat. These two committees form the basic institutional structures that are responsible for addressing school development within the Panchayat. Once the formation of these key committees were ensured in a democratic manner through the prescribed procedure, Prajayatna has worked to ensure that these committees are actively involved in the process of school development and their capabilities to address school requirements are developed.

The various school and Panchayat level interventions have been useful in getting the Panchayats to be actively involved with addressing school requirements. The GP members, especially the Functional Committees members now regularly visit both the schools. The GP members had also invited the head teachers to attend the General Body meeting of the Panchayat where the concerns and requirements of the school were shared with the GP members. The Panchayat has regularly been discussing educational concerns in the General body meeting regularly. The Gram Panchayat Sarpanch who had worked as a vidya volunteer previously was much concerned about the educational situation in his Panchayat.

The Gram Panchayat has ensured the provision of drinking water, toilet and compound wall for the schools. Toilets were provided through the Swachha Bharath Scheme and drinking water has been ensured through the rural water scheme. The compound wall for one school was constructed using funds available with the Gram Panchayat.

Through the involvement of the SMCs and teachers, the Gram Panchayat has supported in increasing the enrollment of students in both schools. In the primary school belonging to the GP headquarter village, the enrollment has almost doubled to 68 students. Enrollments have also increased substantially in the other primary school in the Panchayat. Once the enrollments were increased, additional teachers were required for both the schools. For the school in the GP headquarter village, the Panchayat members and SMC members had made several attempts in getting a teacher sanctioned but no progress was seen. Hence the Gram Panchayat took the initiative and two part time teachers from the local community were appointed for the school and the Gram Panchayat has paid the honorarium of Rs 2500 for these teachers. In the other primary school, the coordinator of the Adult Literacy Programme has been supporting the only teacher in the school after the Gram Panchayat had requested for support.

The Gram Panchayat has also mobilized papers and files to maintain children's learning portfolios. An amount of Rs 3100 was raised from members of the community for this purpose.

Karvena Gram Panchayat

In Karvena Gram Panchayat of Bhootpura Mandal, a Vidya Gram Sabha, GP level network meeting of School Committees, Workshop for GP Presidents and Secretaries at the Mandal level, Teachers Workshop, Enrollment programmes and Orientation sessions for women's self help groups (Mahila Samakhya Sanghas). All key stakeholders such as SMC members, community members, Gram Panchayat members, MEO, Teachers, anganwadi teachers, ANMs, women groups and youth groups have participated in these processes thereby sensitising them to the issue.

This Gram Panchayat has five schools and some of the educational concerns that have been expressed in the meetings conducted by Prajayatna were about: children dropping out of schools, poor attendance, lack of basic facilities such as drinking water, proper classrooms, and poorly maintained toilets, improper functioning of anganwadis, learning concerns, lack of information about schools amongst key stakeholders.

In the initial meetings, it was realized that the Functional Committee that is responsible for education in the Gram Panchayat was not formed and it was also realized that the Gram Panchayat and the local community members did not have basic information of schools in their village. It was decided that the Functional Committee had to be formed and that important basic information off all five schools in the Gram Panchayat will be displayed in the Panchayat office so that the information will be available for everyone. Through the interventions that have been organized in the Gram Panchayat, several issues and requirements that were identified have been addressed.

Some of the developments that are seen in the schools:

- The Functional committee within the Gram Panchayat responsible for education has been formed in a democratic manner

- In all schools, the SMCs have been formed according to the byelaws. The schools have also been supported in ensuring that the committees are reconstited on time as per the requirement.

- Out of 14 identified children who had dropped out of schools, the Gram Panchayat has supported in re-enrolling 5 children.

- Drinking water for one of the schools located in Musalaipalli village has been provided water from the Rural Water Supply (RWS) at a cost of Rs. 150,000, through the efforts of the Gram Panchayat members.

- Four schools toilets have been constructed at a cost of Rs 5,07,500 allocated by SSA.

- For three schools, additional classrooms have been constructed through an allocation of Rs 18,27,000 from the SSA.

- Partially completed kitchen rooms have been completed in three schools through the support of the Vice President of the Gram Panchayat. A sum of Rs. 2,25,000 was allocated for this work from the SSA. `

- Information regarding all children, menu of mid day meals, details of SMC members - basic information of all schools has been displayed in the Gram Panchayat office.

- Processes to engage children in experiential learning have been organized in all schools.

- To support continuous and comprehensive evaluation, learning portfolios of each individual child has been maintained in all schools. Stationary material required for the learning portfolios have been mobilized locally.

Involvement of the Gram Panchayats in the development of education

More than 50% of the Gram Panchayats have voluntarily collected the School Development Plans from the schools and have included them in their annual plans. Some of the Gram Panchayats have got involved with the school teachers and the SMC members in order to ensure enrollment and attendance of the all the children in their vicinity. School and education related issues are being discussed in the general body meetings of the Panchayats with funds being reserved for school development work and various development works being included in their plans. Some of the Gram Panchayats have appointed local teachers for the schools in order to cater to the learning needs of the children wherever there has been a need. Efforts have been made to get permanent teachers for the schools by meeting higher authorities, trying to convince them of the situation faced by the school etc. It can be seen that Gram Panchayats now consider education as one of its primary responsibilities, visiting the schools, taking part in resolving the issues by supporting them and also discussing the issues in various platforms. This also shows the growth of their institutional capacity to plan, implement and review and ensuring that all children within their Panchayats get quality education.

Mandal level initiatives

In all 14 Mandals of Mahabubnagar District, Prajayatna has worked with the Mandal Panchayats towards the development of education. Extensive capability development interventions in the form of workshops and several interactions with the Mandal Panchayats have been organized enabling the Panchayats to address several Mandal level concerns. Several school requirements have been directly addressed by the Mandal Panchayats in all 14 Mandals and substantial resources have been allocated by the Mandal Panchayats to address school requirements. The Mandal level workshops have been attended by MPTC (Mandal Panchayat Territorial Constituency) members, Mandal Development Officers, Mandal Education Officers and Child Development Programme Officers (CDPOs).

Some of the developments that have been possible through Mandal level interventions are:

- Through Mandal level initiatives, the interventions that has been carried out in the select Gram Panchayats where Prajayatna has been working with has been explained in detail to the Mandal Panchayat members with the intention of initiating similar work in other Gram Panchayats in their respective Mandals.

- Through Prajayatna's initiatives the formation of the Education Functional Committees at the Mandal level has been ensured in several Mandals according to the prescribed procedure.

- Through Mandal level processes, the importance of formation of school level committees has been discussed with the Mandal Panchayats and decisions to ensure the formation of SMCs in all schools has been taken at the Mandal level. Several Mandals has initiated processes to identify schools where the committees has not been formed and processes to ensure formation of school committees according to RTE has been undertaken.

- Mandal Panchayats have been supported to identify school requirements and address Mandal level issues such as teacher distribution, migration, allocation and distribution of incentives, and addressing issues which have not been resolved either at the school or Gram Panchayat levels.

Advocacy

Prajayatna had partnered with the Department of Education and the Department of Rural Development and Panchayat Raj since the beginning of the project. Since both these Departments are key stakeholders in ensuring development of schools, Prajayatna has proactively worked in partnership with these Departments. Department functionaries such as Complex Resource Persons, Block Education Officers from the Education Department and Panchayat Development Officers, Secretaries and others from the Department of Panchayat Raj have participated in all key processes. Prajayatna has also worked on the capability development of key functionaries with the intention of institutionalizing its initiatives and ensuring sustainability. Capability development workshops have been conducted for functionaries of PRIs at different levels, and several capability development initiatives have been conducted for teachers also.

In addition to these core interventions, Prajayatna has also partnered with the departments in the following initiatives:

- Special enrolment campaign (Badibata) of SSA. Prajayatna has supported this campaign in our working Mandals and has ensured enrolment of 882 children back to Government schools.

- Worked with the Department of Education to prepare the State Norms of RTE

- Prajayatna has been a part of the core group at the State level that is responsible for designing and conducting trainings for SMCs across the State.

- Prajayatna has worked as a resource organization to prepare training modules for SMCs in the State and also facilitated the process of conducting trainings for several years.

- Worked as a resource organization to prepare training modules for Gram Panchayat elected representatives.

Towards upscaling the work of Prajayatna in Mahabubnagar, Prajayatna has worked on two broad strategies:

Initiating a capability based learning approach in primary schools

The educational governance work has ensured the formation of a conducive learning environment in the schools by addressing basic requirements and school management concerns and ensuring teacher accountability. It has also addressed issues of learning through working with teachers through workshops and enabling both the teachers and the community to have a broader understanding of education and learning. All these efforts has resulted in increased enrollments and attendance, better learning, better relationship between the community and the teachers, accountability of the teachers, involvement of all stakeholders and various other changes. It has also brought about a change in the way the community and especially the SMCs are being viewed by the Government. This has had an overall impact on the learning of the children in the school. However, this has not addressed the need of bringing about a change in way learning/classroom transactions are happening nor in the way children are being assessed nor in the larger context in the perspective of learning amongst the teachers, Department and the community. This entails work to be done directly in the school and with the teachers and the Department. It is with this intention; Prajayatna has initiated its learning approach for Primary schools that have already been implemented in several schools across Karnataka, in one cluster of Mahabubnagar District.

Working with a network of partner organizations in implementing decentralized educational governance interventions

With the intention of scaling the approach of Prajayatna, it was imperative that the organization utilized the years of experience by putting it to use by working with other organisations to take the thoughts and understanding of Prajayatna across Telangana. Prajayatna has begun work with several partner organizations that are based out of Telangana by supporting these organizations in the development of implementation strategies, capability development and onsite support.

Initiation of capability based learning approach in Telangana

Prajayatna initiated its capability based learning approach for primary schools – Kalikayatna, in one Cluster (Complex) of Narayanpete Mandal in Mahabubnagar. This approach which was developed in Karnataka has been able to bring about substantial improvements in children's capability levels in schools across Karnataka where it has been implemented for the past few years.

In select areas of Mahabubnagar District where the work of Prajayatna with the community and the various structures had created an environment where there was an understanding and awareness within the community for the need for change in the way education is being understood and thereby a need for a drastic change in the way classroom transactions were happening. Since there was a certain level of preparedness amongst both the community and the Department officials Kota Tanda Complex in Narayanpete Mandal was selected for the initiation of Kalikayatna approach. The approach has been initiated with the children of Std 1 to 3 with it being upgraded in the coming years. This Complex has a total of 13 schools with 858 students and 18 teachers belonging to Std 1 to 3.

Processes that have taken place:

- Prajayatna had organized a meeting with the DEO to present the approach and explain the intention of initiating the Kalikayatna approach in one cluster in the District. Through this presentation and discussion, the required permission from the DEO was obtained to initiate the approach on a pilot basis in one Cluster.

- An introduction of the Kalikayatna approach was organized for the MEO and Complex head and the implementation process was discussed in detail with both officials.

- Initial orientation process was conducted for all 18 teachers who take classes from Std 1 to 3 in primary schools in the selected cluster. The MEO and complex head also participated in this process.

- All basic documents required for initiating and conducting classroom processes according to the Kalikayatna approach were prepared in Telugu by Prajayatna. Some of the initial materials prepared: concept note on the approach, implementation manual for teachers and format for children's baseline.

- The initial teachers' collective meeting was conducted for all teachers. This meeting covered the learning principles based on which the Kalikayatna approach has been developed and key implementation steps. The meeting covered 20 teachers and both the CRP and MEO.

- Post the initial collective meeting; the second collective was organized in the consecutive month. This meeting was attended by 22 teachers and the MEO. This meeting covered concept based learning, selecting concepts and facilitating concept based learning in classrooms, concept plan preparation. An example was demonstrated for all teachers by selecting on concept and developing a classroom plan and activities for this concept.

- Post the initiation of classroom processes, Prajayatna team members have been visiting classrooms of all schools in the cluster to make observations and support teachers. It has been observed that in 7 schools in the cluster, teacher have been actively implementing the approach.

- An initial report has been prepared and shared with key stakeholders.

In addition to these activities, Prajayatna team members have been actively involved in mobilizing learning materials such as stationary material and files & sheets for learning portfolios. Material worth Rs 28,800 have been mobilized from individual donors and small businesses and distributed to all 13 schools in the cluster.

- 8 teachers, MEO, CRP from Kotakonda complex and two Prajayatna facilitators visited schools of Kandakur cluster in Yadagiri district of Karnataka State in order to observe the process of Kalikayatna that was being implemented in the schools for the past 6 years. This helped them to further understand the approach and helped them to contextualise it according to the needs of their schools and children.

- The teachers were split into groups and spent the whole day in observing the processes in different schools. The whole group session alongwith the way the children were made into groups as well as the learner group themes and presentations were keenly observed, The individual practice time was spent in seeing how the teachers allocated work to the children according to their learning levels and needs.

- The Mahabubnagar teachers were filled with admiration for the efforts of the teachers in Yadgiri. They clarified the various doubts they had of the approach and the problems they faced in the course of implementation. They felt that since the learning process was not restricted to that of the textbooks, the teachers were able to use their creativity and ensure that the children had ample learning opportunities which helped them to develop their various capabilities.

- While interacting with the Cluster Resource Person of Karnataka, the teachers wanted to know whether providing pre determined concept maps would help the teachers in their classroom transactions. The CRP replied saying that on the contrary, such a process would undermine the entire process as the contexualisation and the creativity would then not be there in the process.

A Kalikayatna Classroom

The teachers began the day by getting all the children to sit in a big circle with a question 'when do schools remain closed' for which one of the answers given by the children was 'festival' which was the concept for the day. As the teacher delved deeper into the concept of 'festival', the children were found to become more articulate. When asked to name some of the festivals celebrated in the village, the children were able to make a list of which many of them were not found in the prescribed textbook. When children could not name some of the festivals which were celebrated by Muslims and Christians, the teacher initiated a discussion on the festivals celebrated by different religions and in different cultures, thereby getting the children to think about culture and religion in a broader manner. She facilitated them to articulate the rituals that are followed during the festival days and how each festival is different. Children explicitly expressed the rituals followed by them. Subsequently, the teacher divided the children into four groups with each group being given a specific aspect of the concept in order to enable the children to gain deeper understanding of the concept.

> Whole group processes serves as a context builder. This connects the chosen content that children are going to learn with the experiences of the children in real life thereby enabling them to connect spontaneously. The discussion and peer sharing helps the children to articulate, become fearless and gain self confidence.

1st group – How do we celebrate a festival?

2nd group - What do we need for celebrating festivals?

3rd group – Who comes to visit us?

4th group - How do they come?

Children were given the freedom to sit wherever they wished in their groups and work on the activity. Children had ample amount of time to discuss and complete their task with the teacher lending a helping hand whenever children required her support or needed some clarifications. She supported the groups which she knew required guidance. Once the task was completed by all, they were facilitated to come together for presenting their work. Each group presented their work with the other groups clarifying their doubts which were a form of feedback as well.

'Children working in small groups provide them the freedom to design how they can perform the given task; learn to communicate with each other in a manner such that the younger ones take the support of the older children so that every child in the group understands. In a small group all have to share materials, ideas and pool their efforts in order to complete their task qualitatively. Taking leadership on a rotation basis in a small group enables each one in the team to develop leadership quality and work together in a group. Here they learn to work in collaboration rather than competing with each other, which is what will serve them well in the long run.

Learner group activity is effective in enhancing social skills as peers learn to listen to one another, understand each one's articulation, respond and accept others' viewpoints.

Post lunch children sat according to their learning levels pertaining to reading, writing and maths. The teachers then gave work to the children depending on their capabilities which enabled the children to practice and gain mastery over their skills.

On 29.07.2015 teacher collective meeting was organized in Kotagunde complex. 25 participants including teachers from 13 schools, CRP, MEO had taken part in the meeting. Collective started with welcome speech by CRP, later moved on to discuss key aspects of learning such as what should children learn, how do they learn, what is the role of schools in children learning etc.

Naturally teachers responded by articulating that children should learn to read, write, speak, gain general knowledge, subject knowledge, learn moral values etc. Ultimately they came to the conclusion conveying children should learn the skill which is necessary to choose their carrier.

While discussing how children learn, they conveyed that children learn through expressing, writing, reading, observing, peer interaction, reflection prior experiences etc. They identified what should schools focus on for the children who are in primary level. Subsequently they identified the list of abilities including speaking, writing, identifying, comparing, basic operation etc. that children need to learn in the schools, and enabling children to develop these abilities in children is chief objective of schools.

Subsequently had brainstorming session on 'content and capabilities, how learning takes place, how to facilitate a concept to the children in the class. Following this teacher drafted details concept plan by selecting 'Festival' as a concept to facilitate classroom process in the upcoming month.

Sustaining educational governance initiatives through partnerships

Prajayatna has been exploring the possibility of working with a network of partner organizations who are already involved in working with communities in different Mandals of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh in order to reach out to schools in new geographical locations.

With this intention, Prajayatna has initiated a partnership with United Way of Hyderabad. Prajayatna with United Way has initiated work on strengthening the institutional capabilities of School Management Committees, through a project that works with schools in the urban areas of Bahadurpura Mandal of Hyderabad District. The project will be undertaken through a select group of implementing partners (Magic Bus, Aga Khan Academy, Teach for India, Nirmaan Foundation).Prajayatna will be involved in developing the strategy for implementation of the project and in developing the capabilities of the implementing partners. Prajayatna will also be involved in project implementation by providing onsite support and by reviewing the effectiveness of project implementation.

Through such interventions Prajayatna aims at broad basing its approach towards decentralized educational governance and on facilitating involvement of community and other key stakeholders.

Learnings

The objective of Prajayatna is to bring about a systemic change in the practices and initiatives of the education system. The efforts gone into enabling the various stakeholders to contribute to the development of the school and improve the learning environment of the children should also be understood in the context of seeing a change within the system through the engagement of the various players. These changes can only be felt over a period of time which at times is difficult to assess. Some of these outcomes that will have a long lasting impact on the system that can be seen are:

- The community level processes have been able to create a demand for quality education and there is an understanding that education is a fundamental right of every citizen. Through our work with community structures, the effect has been broad based as the demand for quality education increases.

- Practices of transparency and accountability that have been initiated through different processes of Prajayatna have resulted in better governance and contributed towards improving the quality of schooling.

- Different possibilities in providing learning opportunities for children have been explored with communities and other stakeholders, making it possible for them to look at learning beyond schools.

- Several initiatives of Prajayatna that have been implemented with respect to Educational Governance are applicable to other domains such as public health, provision of civic amenities, etc.

- Through Prajayatna's work with the Standing Committees that are also responsible for other areas in addition to education, the work has indirectly contributed to addressing these social areas of public interest.

- The work with the Gram Panchayats will lead to improvement in the overall functioning of the Gram Panchayat and thereby better delivery of services for the community.

- By making learners out of the students in Kalikayatna, the learning path of the children is ensured as it has been seen that the children from these schools go on to higher classes with a marked increase of interest, self confidence and curiosity which helps them to explore and have a better understanding of concepts.

- Making facilitators out of teachers have ensured that they develop various skills and abilities which will make them better teachers in the long run, creating learning opportunities for the children.