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REPORT ON THE EVALUATION STUDY OF PRAJAYATNA'S INCLUSIVE EDUCATION PROJECT IN BAHRAICH AND CHITRAKOOT

2023



ARCHANA NAMBIAR

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List of Abbreviations

CBM	Christoffel Blinden Mission
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CWD	Children with Disabilities
DIET	District Institute of Educational Training
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FLN	Foundational Literacy and Numeracy
GP	Gram Panchayat
HI	Hearing Impairment
ID	Intellectual Disability
IEP	Individualized Education Plan
IERT	Inclusive Education Resource Teachers
MD	Multiple Disability
MDM	Mid-Day Meals
NEP	National Education Policy (2020)
NIPUN	National Initiative for Proficiency in Reading with Understanding and Numeracy
NPRC	Nyay Panchayat Resource Centre
NPRCC	Nyay Panchayat Resource Centre Co-ordinator
OH	Orthopedically Handicapped
QLI	Quality Learning Initiative
RPwD	Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act
RTE	The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act (2009)
SCERT	State Council of Educational Research and Training
SDP	School Development Plan
SMC	School Management Committee
TLM	Teaching-Learning Materials
UDISE	Unified District Information on School Education
VI	Vision Impairment

Executive Summary

Prajayatna has been implementing Kalikayatna, Quality Learning Initiative (QLI) to strengthen the Inclusive Education programme in government schools of Chitrakoot and Bahraich with active community involvement. The project has been funded by Christoffel Blinden Mission (CBM) an international organization and is being implemented in 75 primary schools in four clusters, two each from Chitrakoot and Bahraich. The project is aimed at supporting and making local communities capable of taking ownership for the quality of government schools in their vicinity with an ambition to increase the quality of education imparted to their children in these schools. Through community participation and ownership, the project attempts to achieve almost universal enrolment of children, accessible physical infrastructure, adequate and proper availability of staff and quality classroom learning processes in selected schools in these two districts.

The evaluation focussed on assessing the project's inclusive approach to education reform. The goals of the evaluation were as follows:

- Determine the extent to which a learner centric environment has been created in the selected government primary schools;
- Determine the extent to which children with disabilities have been included and provided quality inclusive education in selected government schools;
- Assess the extent to which the project has strengthened the ownership of primary school education by decentralized education governance structures;
- Ascertain the extent to which the project objectives have been met and identify factors that have facilitated or impeded the progress towards meeting these objectives;
- Ascertain the percentage of learners who demonstrate improvement in learning outcomes;
- Provide inputs and suggestions on improving the design and implementation of the project.

Methodology:

The evaluation adopted a mixed-methods approach to gather both quantitative and qualitative information from stakeholders. The data collection process encompassed both primary and secondary sources. Qualitative methods were employed to delve deeper into the experiences of secondary stakeholders concerning the Kalikayatna project and its various processes.

A sub-sample of 11 schools was randomly selected for classroom observations and learning outcome surveys. During the observations, one or two grades were observed

at each sample school. The same cohort of students were part of the learning outcome survey at baseline and endline. These same schools also served as the unit for conducting qualitative discussions with other stakeholders such as parents, School Management Committee members, and Gram Panchayat (GP) members. Additionally, data gathered by Prajayatna for children with disabilities in these schools as part of regular assessments was analyzed to gain insights into the progress of these children. One teacher each from the sample school implementing the Quality Learning Initiative was selected to be administered the teacher survey.

Tools:

- Teacher Questionnaire
- Classroom Observation Schedule
- Discussion guides for conducting FGDs with Gram Panchayat Presidents and members, Parents (of children with and without disabilities) and School Management Committees
- Assessment test for literacy
- Assessment test for numeracy
- Test for non-scholastic competencies

Conclusions and Recommendations:

The key conclusions for each of the four evaluation questions, along with the corresponding recommendations, are presented below.

Conclusions	Recommendations
Goal 1: Determine the extent to which a learner centric environment has been created in the selected government primary schools	
The crucial aspects of Kalikayatna, particularly the integration of subjects and a departure from traditional textbook-focused teaching, have been successfully implemented across all visited schools. A significant accomplishment is the integration of Kalikayatna with FLN outcomes, emphasizing that it's not viewed as a separate intervention but rather as an approach fostering a learner-centric environment. Teachers have embraced new methods, especially working with mixed-age groups, to engage with all children effectively. The instructional format has shifted from rote-based methods to a more joyful and activity-based approach, utilizing various teaching-learning methods like whole group	The Kalikayatna project has successfully demonstrated an alternative and inclusive approach to enhance teaching-learning processes in resource-poor schools, showcasing its potential for district-wide implementation. Given the positive impact of the Kalikayatna approach on various learning parameters and its success in achieving foundational literacy and numeracy outcomes, there is potential for scaling up the approach to cover the entire district. The philosophy and approach of the Kalikayatna project have been validated through the documentation of the model. To further strengthen this validation, collaboration with district-level educational personnel, including the Basic Shiksha Adhikari, becomes crucial. This expansion would require strategic planning, collaboration with district education authorities,

instruction, small group work, and individual practice. Teacher perceptions regarding Kalikayatna indicate a shift in mindset towards children's learning through mixed age-groups, integration of subjects, learning and assessment, cognitive and socio-emotional domains integration, recognition of diverse learning needs, acknowledgement of the significance of continuous assessment, going beyond textbooks and the formulation of individual education plans. Additionally, there was a departure from the notion that children learn solely through drill and repetition. Nevertheless, there appeared to be an acceptance of evaluating children through examinations. An increase was seen in the number of teachers who used concept maps regularly in classrooms. Most teachers implemented different group work strategies such as whole-class instruction and small group work, either daily or 3-4 times a week. While textbooks continued to be a primary instructional tool, teachers diversified their materials, incorporating a print-rich environment, teaching-learning materials from Prajayatna and the department, digital resources, and more. Teachers consistently provided dedicated time for individual work on a daily basis. They also provided daily individual feedback and utilized a variety of materials for instruction. Sharing and reviewing student progress were reported as occurring daily, once a week or three times a week. While there was largely an agreement for integration of subjects, teachers reported that subjects were taught separately in accordance with FLN. There was a notable increase in teachers fostering participation in classrooms observing children and providing feedback. This was also true in the case of children with disabilities for whom teachers provided opportunities for learning on a regular basis. Teacher Collectives stand out as a highly beneficial input, enabling teachers to collaboratively develop monthly plans, share experiences, discuss best practices, and seek solutions for challenges. Despite the shift to a	alignment with broader educational planning for the district, and additional resources to support the widespread adoption. In the further scaling up of the project, Prajayatna would need to partner with institutions such as the District Institute of Educational Training (DIET). Prajayatna could work closely with DIETS to support their pre-service and in-service training and integrate the Kalikayatna approach to equip all teachers at the district level with the necessary philosophy, pedagogical tools, methodologies, and subject expertise to address educational challenges effectively. Collaborating with Mission Prerana could enhance the effectiveness of the Prajayatna approach across pedagogy, capacity building of teachers, and community engagement. Aligning assessment strategies with the specific outcomes associated with grades 1-5 would contribute to a more targeted and impactful approach. A shift is needed from training only two teachers to including all teachers, including Shiksha Mitras, in the training process. Establishing mechanisms for the participation of all teachers in collective meetings, the central strategy for capacity building in the project, is crucial for the comprehensive implementation of the Kalikayatna approach across schools. The capacity-building component of onsite support to teachers needs to be further strengthened by developing a systematic plan. There is a need to establish a joint system of capacity building and monitoring involving officials from key government institutions, such as the district and block officials. Intensive training on conducting continuous and comprehensive assessments aligned with NIPUN outcomes is crucial for teachers to effectively monitor and enhance students' learning.

prescriptive FLN lesson plan, teachers continue to create lesson plans for Kalikayatna classrooms based on collective meeting inputs. Teacher Collectives are recognized as a central strategy for strengthening the NPRC, building teacher autonomy, and enhancing confidence. Prajayatna's Cluster Coordinator's on-site support has played a crucial role in facilitating the implementation of various processes. Significant positive changes have been observed in the participation of students with and without disabilities in classrooms. The atmosphere is characterized by friendliness and a lack of fear. Students demonstrate discipline, collaboration, and a willingness to learn from one another. They actively engage in activities, ask questions, and express themselves confidently. However, there is a need for further capacity building in the area of assessment. While teachers acknowledge the importance of continuous and comprehensive assessment, there seems to be a perception of pressure from the department to track students on various parameters. Despite this understanding, actual assessment practices appear to fall short of being truly comprehensive, especially in covering various domains of learning.	
Goal 2: Determine the extent to which children with disabilities have been included and provided quality inclusive education in selected government schools	
Prajayatna has played an important role in mobilizing and enrolling children with disabilities. During the project period, 203 children from both districts have been enrolled in the programme of which 86 children have been enrolled to shcool. Of this Prajayatna has contributed 42.36% of enrollment. Prajayatna has been carrying out regular outreach visits to communities and identifying CWDs through home visits and convincing parents to send them to school. Prajayatna has facilitated support for a total of 203 children to access various entitlements, including school enrollment, disability certification, AADHAR card, escort allowance, assistive devices tailored to their specific	More specific inputs on different strategies for working with various types of disabilities are needed for teachers. Instead of training just one or two teachers, all teachers in the school need to be trained on working with children with disabilities. Drawing up a comprehensive capacity-building plan jointly by the district authorities and Prajayatna for teachers, department functionaries, and parents of CWDs would be required. Collaboration with key institutions such as DIET, the State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT), UNICEF, and other disability-related organizations in the state, as well as higher

disabilities, stipends, opening bank accounts, and tablets. Prajayatna's comprehensive support initiatives encompassed the organization of camps and parental meetings, ensuring certification, conducting medical check-ups and measurement camps for the provision of aids and appliances, and arranging for experts to visit the homes of children with disabilities. These strategic interventions were recognized as critical for rehabilitating children with severe disabilities and enhancing the overall quality of their lives. To institutionalize rehabilitation and information services for children with disabilities, Resource Centers have been set up in both districts. Presently, 26 children have accessed a range of services customized to their specific needs. These centers actively collaborate with local physicians, special educators, and department officials, forming partnerships to address the unique challenges faced by these children in terms of both learning and personal development. However, a notable limitation is the absence of specialized healthcare providers (doctors, psychologists, physiotherapists, speech therapists, etc.), causing delays in the certification process and, in some cases, treatment, including various therapies. Teachers have received specific training on fostering inclusion and managing children with disabilities (CWDs) in their classrooms. Evidently, teachers have actively cultivated an inclusive environment, ensuring the participation of CWDs in the learning processes. Prajayatna's Teaching-Learning Materials, notably the Tactopus Learning Kits, have proven instrumental in teaching children with disabilities. All teachers reported collaborative efforts with Prajayatna staff and parents in developing Individualized Education Plans, which they largely adhere to for instruction and progress tracking of students. However, the comprehensive tracking tool designed by Prajayatna for monitoring CWDs' progress is not optimally utilized, primarily due to the considerable time investment and nuanced understanding it requires.	education institutions for people with disabilities, needs to be established. Prajayatna needs to formulate a systematic plan to facilitate the educational progression of children with disabilities beyond primary school. Collaborating with the education department, like-minded institutions, and organizations at the state level is essential to identify diverse higher education possibilities based on the specific needs and extent of disabilities of the students. Additionally, exploring vocational education options is crucial. However, providing a multidisciplinary approach within the framework of government schools might pose challenges. Obtaining support from key stakeholders, including the government for policy mandates and industry players for employment pathways, is essential to enhance the inclusivity of vocational learning across educational settings. The Resource Center should be developed as a focal point for all rehabilitation-related services for children with disabilities. Additionally, there is a need to significantly enhance the capacities of IERTs and department officials. Seeking support from local organizations, disability groups, private schools, clinics, and hospitals may be required to enhance the capacities of the resource center. Networking with other departments to provide a holistic package of services for children with all types of disabilities is crucial.

Teachers often grapple with strategies essential for advancing the learning of CWDs. While Prajayatna's onsite support has been beneficial to some extent, additional training and ongoing support are deemed necessary. The effectiveness of Inclusive Education Resource Teachers (IERTs) has been limited, primarily due to their inability to make regular school visits owing to their demanding workload. The involvement of Inclusive Education Resource Teachers (IERTs) in both school-based and home-based education interventions is currently limited. This limitation is primarily attributed to the significant workload experienced by IERTs. Interactions with parents of CWDs revealed that opportunities for higher education are limited for CWDs. For specific disabilities such as VI and HI, there are limited institutions in the district or even in the state. For those with intellectual ID and MD, the future pathways seem further narrowed.	
Goal 3: Assess the extent to which the project has strengthened the ownership of primary school education by decentralized education governance structures	
Over the years, Prajayatna has been able to create a conducive environment for children with disabilities in the community. Community is being seen as an identity and a form of diversity rather than solely a deficit. They recognize the rights of children with disabilities and the need for the provision of equal opportunities. The work on strengthening of community structures such as School Management Committees and Gram Panchayats took a backseat in the initial year owing to the pandemic. Subsequently in both districts, cluster-level workshops were conducted for Education Standing Committees (Shikshak Samiti) to familiarize them with their roles and responsibilities. GP-level meetings were organized to deliberate on the Panchayat's role in education, addressing issues related to schools and *anganwadis*, and developing action plans. GP-level network meetings were also convened, bringing together GP Pradhans, members, Education Standing Committee members, SMC members, and teachers to	There is a clear need for SMCs and GPs to move beyond resolving issues such as infrastructure, enrollment retention, and teacher attendance that have been addressed in most project schools. While several SMC members have begun to monitor students' learning and progress, teaching-learning in classrooms, and teachers dealing with children with disabilities, their capabilities need to be built considerably in these areas. Greater transparency and accountability in the process of forming the SMC are required. There needs to be a focus on creating awareness about the roles and responsibilities of SMC members in the composition and selection procedure of SMCs. Guidelines on the election process must be clearly expressed and shared openly with the chairperson, school head, and other SMC members. It needs to be democratic, involving all parents, and especially giving due representation to parents of children with disabilities.

discuss school-related matters and supporting children with disabilities. There appeared to be an evolving understanding of the Gram Panchayat's role in addressing infrastructural issues in schools, supporting enrollment, providing entitlements and facilities to children with disabilities and ensuring regular attendance of students and teachers. The Gram Panchayats have made significant contributions, particularly in improving school infrastructure. The visible improvements, observed during project school visits, were facilitated through *Operation Kayakalp*, a Government of Uttar Pradesh initiative that allocates funds to the Gram Panchayat for school repair and maintenance. The rejuvenation efforts included constructing boundary walls, ensuring safe and clean drinking water, installing piped water systems, providing hand washing units, and building kitchen sheds. In most locations, SMCs are active and willing to participate in the school development processes. School level meetings held to orient them about the various roles and responsibilities w.r.t children and education- attendance, bridging learning gaps owing to COVID-19, inclusive learning environment at school, supporting, enrolment, learning and other needs of CWDs, supporting children in their learning at home, regular school visits and interactions with teachers, maintenance and upkeep of school premises, planning for school infrastructure and so on. In the newly formed SMCs (16), a parent of CWD has also been included. SMCs have achieved notable successes, particularly in increasing school attendance among irregular students. They have played a crucial role in ensuring that Direct Benefit Transfer reaches all students, providing entitlements such as textbooks, uniforms, and transport allowances. Additionally, all SMCs have been actively involved in enhancing the physical infrastructure of schools, resulting in an overall improvement in the school environment. In some schools, SMCs also discuss the progress of children with parents. Overall, one can see improved relationships between teachers, parents and SMC members. There is greater awareness about education in	Dedicated modules should be developed for capacity building in the areas of financial information and the development of SDP. There needs to be a further focus to strengthen GPs, enabling them to develop into mature organizations delivering their mandate through a structured organizational development approach. Further work needs to be taken up in the areas of activation of Standing Committees on Education. There is a need to further support the GP Pradhan with the required knowledge to perform their roles with respect to education.

SMCs and GPs. Most remarkable improvements in the physical environment of schools is seen in instances where there is a close coordination between the GP and SMC.	
Goal 4: Ascertain the percentage of learners who demonstrate improvement in learning outcomes	
Foundational Literacy and Numeracy: A cohort of 302 children, divided into two groups (A and B), underwent an assessment to gauge their progress in literacy and numeracy. These groups were in grades 2 and 3 at the baseline and transitioned to grades 4 and 5 at the endline. Notably, the tool used was not grade-appropriate, considering the children had recently returned to school after pandemic-related closures. The literacy assessment encompassed dimensions like reading comprehension and phonological awareness, while the numeracy assessment covered aspects such as number sense, number operations, measurement, time, money, and data. At baseline, the proportion of children correctly answering the literacy questions was 25.86%, and for numeracy, it was 28.51%. This proportion witnessed a substantial increase, reaching 81.54% for literacy and 78% for numeracy at the endline. For Group A, the literacy score increased from 22.05% at baseline to 80.09% at endline, and the numeracy score rose from 28.34% to 76.80%. Similarly, for Group B, the literacy score improved from 24.05% to 82.47%, while the numeracy score increased from 49.23% to 78.77%. All groups achieved scores above 78% at the endline, with the most significant improvement observed in Group B for literacy. The least change was noted in Group B for numeracy, which started at 49.23% at baseline and progressed to 78.77% at endline. There were no significant differences between the performance of boys and girls in literacy at	The findings offer insights into learning levels, guiding the refinement of learning trajectories. Prajayatna and stakeholders can use this information to identify areas for improvement and develop targeted strategies to support learning. District-specific analysis raises awareness among stakeholders, identifies curricular dimensions, and prompts pedagogical adjustments for achieving learning outcomes.

both baseline and endline. However, for numeracy, girls demonstrated slightly better performance at baseline, and this trend persisted even at endline. The most notable change in literacy occurred in decoding, with the percentage increasing significantly from 25.71% at baseline to 91.5%. In contrast, the performance change for other dimensions of reading, such as comprehension, phonological awareness, and writing, showed a relatively consistent pattern. In reading comprehension, the cohort exhibited a significant increase from a moderate initial assessment at 30.19% to 86.09% at endline. In terms of phonological awareness, the cohort demonstrated a score of 21.94% at baseline, which significantly improved to 76.24% at endline. For writing, the initial baseline score of 25.37% showed substantial improvement, reaching 78.84% at the endline. The most notable improvement in performance in numeracy can be seen in the dimension of number sense. From a moderate level of understanding and proficiency in number sense (30.68%), the cohort achieved a substantial increase by the endline (82.48%). However, it is worrisome to note the change in performance in number operations, measuring competencies related to the addition and subtraction of two digits. The initial assessment indicates 25.66% proficiency in executing arithmetic operations. Although there is improvement at the endline (38.82%), the percentage suggests progress, with room for further enhancement. There has been a significant improvement in performance in the dimensions of measurement, time, money, and data. The cohort, starting with a baseline achievement of 28.55%, progressed to 74.5% by the endline. In the domain of measurement, there was a noteworthy improvement. Starting with a baseline performance of 24.33%, the cohort demonstrated a significant advancement, achieving a score of 77.64% at the endline. Varied abilities of Children:	

A separate tool was used to assess children's abilities across attitudinal domains. This task focused on problem-solving, including problem identification, evaluation, recognition of feelings, empathy, and finding solutions. Both Group A and Group B demonstrated varying degrees of problem-solving abilities across different parameters, with some differences in the extent of their responses. Performance of Children with Disabilities: Two separate assessment tools are utilized for evaluating children with disabilities. The initial tool assesses all children with disabilities, and those demonstrating significant progress undergo further evaluation using the second tool. In Bahraich, the first tool was applied to assess 27 children, with 12 subsequently evaluated using the second tool. In Chitrakoot, the first tool was employed to assess 22 children, and 7 underwent evaluation with the second tool. Bahraich: Children demonstrated significant advancements in self-help skills, with an increase in the 'independent' category and a decline in 'dependent' and other categories. Socio-emotional skills showed positive changes, particularly in the 'independent' category for peer engagement. Motor skills exhibited progress with an increase in 'evolving' and 'independent' categories. Cognitive and perceptual skills displayed improvement in both 'independent' and 'evolving' categories. Language and communication skills, however, saw an increase in the 'evolving' category, while the 'independent' category dropped for specific parameters. However, the assessment results for the second tool indicated dropping performance across most domains. Chitrakoot: Positive trends include increased independence in self-help tasks, particularly in toileting and personal grooming. Socio-emotional skills show improvement, with reduced dependency and more children transitioning to higher self-reliance	

levels. In mobility and manipulative skills, there are mixed results, with changes in evolving and independent categories. Cognitive and perceptual skills exhibit a notable increase in evolving and independent categories. Language and communication skills generally improve, but one task sees a slight increase in the dependent category. Evaluation with the second tool indicated an increase in the 'changing' and 'evolving' categories, with some children moving into the 'independent' categories.	

Chapter I:

Introduction:

Prajayatna, a non-profit organization with a legacy spanning over 20 years, is dedicated to bringing about systemic change in the education system. Their focus is on ensuring quality education for all children by building the institutional capabilities of various educational structures. This includes School Management Committees (SMCs), *Anganwadi* level Monitoring Committees, etc., with the aim of institutionalizing community ownership of the education process.

Capacity building is integral to Prajayatna's work, empowering teachers to view learning as a holistic process. They support children's learning in a way that enables them to apply acquired knowledge to real-life situations. Operating in six states—Karnataka, Telangana, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Jharkhand, and Uttar Pradesh—Prajayatna has been a driving force in reshaping education. Presently, their work continues in Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, and Karnataka.

Kalikayatna, Prajayatna's Quality Learning Initiative (QLI), serves as a comprehensive approach to learning, prioritizing the support of children's education to enable them to apply acquired knowledge in various life situations. It is based on two premises- that it supports children's learning styles to help them build on their innate capabilities and achieve ability-based learning outcomes as determined by all concerned stakeholders. Launched in 2016 as a pilot project in the districts of Chitrakoot and Bahraich in Uttar Pradesh, Kalikayatna aims to establish an inclusive model of governance and learning in government schools, ensuring universal access to quality education for all children.

Funded by the Christoffel Blinden Mission (CBM), an international organization, the project was implemented in all primary schools across four clusters in Chitrakoot and Bahraich. Kalikayatna is built on the principles of adapting to children's learning styles, leveraging their innate capabilities, and achieving ability-based learning outcomes as determined by stakeholders. The project seeks to empower local communities to take ownership of the quality of government schools in their vicinity, fostering universal enrollment, accessible infrastructure, proper staff availability, and high-quality classroom learning processes. Through community participation and ownership, Kalikayatna has worked on enhancing the overall quality of education provided to children in the selected schools in these two districts.

In the second phase of the project, the primary focus is to persistently work in the 75 government schools, aiming to enhance the learning outcomes of children. The project places specific emphasis on reinforcing the Inclusive Education program in

government schools located in Chitrakoot and Bahraich, with a strong emphasis on active community involvement.

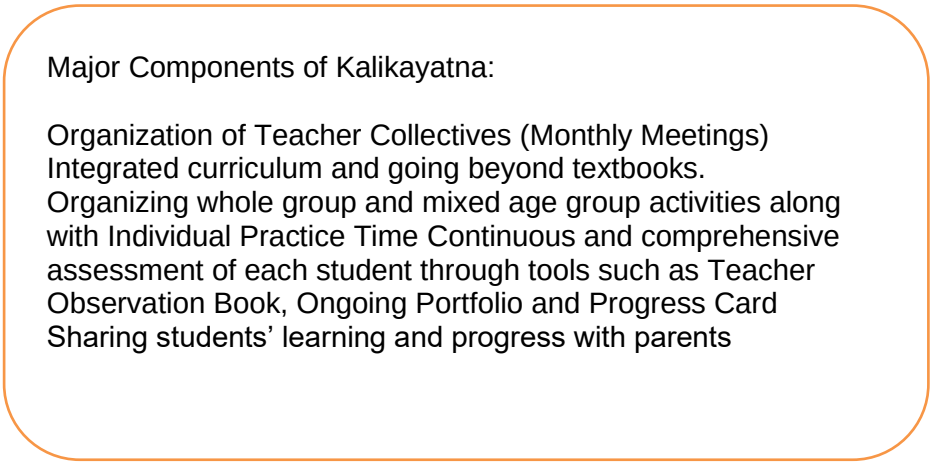
Kalikayatna strives to establish a learner-centric environment in government primary schools. The project empowers teachers to ensure that the learning approach prioritizes the development of abilities and the learning process. This approach encourages children to collaborate, discuss, think critically, be creative, and develop skills that facilitate effective learning.

The initiative also aims to streamline the unique and inclusive learning approach implemented in selected schools, focusing on building the capabilities of all children, including those with disabilities, in an organic manner. Kalikayatna is committed to documenting and disseminating this model, sharing insights with other stakeholders to reach a broader audience and contribute to bringing about systemic change in education.

The entire learning process within Kalikayatna is organic, tailored to support children based on their individual styles and paces. This inclusive approach ensures that all children, including those with disabilities, can learn together. The program seeks to promote children's learning through a natural and organic manner. In such an environment, students with disabilities seamlessly become part of the classroom learning groups, fostering active participation without discrimination in all learning processes.

The ultimate goal is to create an ecosystem that is sensitive to the needs of every student, including those with disabilities. The aim is to address their needs in a manner that nurtures and enhances their capabilities through self-directed learning. In this setting, teachers play a crucial role as facilitators, empowered to understand learning as a holistic process for the overall development of each child.

Figure 1: Major Components of Kalikayatna



The project will facilitate the identification of children with disabilities (CWD) through its community-driven processes. Its primary focus is on transforming education into an inclusive process within these schools, ensuring genuine accessibility for all children, including those with disabilities. To achieve this, the project will address the specific needs and requirements of these children, with the goal of increasing their enrollment and active participation in the classroom.

The initiative is committed to ensuring that schools have the necessary facilities and suitable opportunities to facilitate the learning of children with disabilities alongside their peers. This approach aims to create an educational environment that is truly inclusive and accommodating for every student.

The COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent school closures have greatly disrupted various aspects of children's lives, encompassing health, education, development, and overall well-being. The repercussions of the pandemic have been particularly challenging for children, exacerbating mental health issues and complicating family dynamics, including protection from violence and abuse. The aftermath of COVID-19 has underscored the significance of a holistic approach, given its far-reaching impact on children.

Even before the pandemic, children with disabilities faced significant disadvantages, experiencing heightened vulnerability to abuse and discrimination while encountering reduced access to services globally. The education system, a cornerstone of child development, has been severely affected by the pandemic, with children with disabilities being among the worst impacted. Despite legislative frameworks protecting the right to education for all children, a substantial number of children with disabilities remain unenrolled. It is estimated that one-fourth of CWDs between 5-19 years, and three-fourth of five-year olds, are not enrolled in any formal schooling. This disparity is exacerbated by socio-economic disparities, as a significant proportion of disabled children in India come from economically disadvantaged households, with a majority residing in rural areas (UNESCO, 2019, Vidhi, 2020).

Inaccessibility of education for many CWDs is thus also a function of poverty. The pandemic has magnified these existing vulnerabilities, bringing to light the urgent need for targeted efforts to address disparities in education. Children with disabilities and their families have borne a disproportionate burden during the crisis. These children are not only at a higher risk of contracting and experiencing severe illness due to COVID-19 but also face obstacles in accessing health services, information, and communication measures. Recognizing these challenges, there is a pressing need for both inclusive and differentiated measures to cater to the specific needs of children living with disabilities in the post-pandemic landscape.

A study conducted by the Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy in 2020 contributes to the limited body of knowledge documenting the unique challenges faced by students with disabilities in accessing education during the pandemic in India. The study revealed that poverty plays a pivotal role in the inaccessibility of education for many children with disabilities. Households experienced significant challenges, including the loss of livelihoods, incomes, housing, increased debts, nutritional deficiencies, and an inability to access medical care.

The study also highlighted that the modes of instruction used during the pandemic were inaccessible for several reasons, with a significant barrier being the lack of adequate infrastructure. Teachers reported increased engagement in non-teaching activities, job insecurity, and challenges in using digital modes of instruction for teaching children with disabilities. This underscores the multifaceted impact of the pandemic on the educational landscape, especially for vulnerable populations, and highlights the need for comprehensive solutions to address these challenges.

The National Education Policy (NEP), 2020, stands as a significant milestone in championing equal opportunities for children with disabilities throughout the educational system. An essential triumph lies in the acknowledgment and endorsement of the 2016 Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (RPWD) and its provisions for inclusive education. Inclusive education, as defined by the policy, entails a system where students with and without disabilities learn together. This transformative approach encompasses non-discrimination in schools, ensuring accessible infrastructure, providing reasonable accommodations, individualized supports, and incorporating tools like Braille and Indian Sign language in teaching, among other measures. The policy also emphasizes monitoring and evaluation to ensure the effective implementation of these provisions.

Furthermore, the NEP, 2020, underscores the importance of recruiting special educators with cross-disability training, bringing specialized expertise to support students with diverse needs. It goes beyond this by incorporating disability awareness within teacher education, recognizing the critical role teachers play in fostering an inclusive learning environment. These progressive measures collectively represent a commitment to realizing the principles of equity and accessibility for all students, aligning with the global call for an inclusive and empowering education system.

Global commitments to the education of children with disabilities, as outlined in the Sustainable Development Goals (United Nations, 2015) and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), along with domestic legislations and schemes such as Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan, the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act (2009 and amendment Act 2012), and the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 (RPWD), have significantly advanced the movement toward an inclusive education system. While there is an increasing number of children with disabilities enrolling in mainstream government and private schools,

there is a pressing need to create a more inclusive environment that is sensitive to their needs and ensures the provision of quality education.

The national white paper on National Education Policy and Disability Inclusive Education, published by the National Centre for Promotion of Employment of Disabled People, strongly advocates for enhancing the enrollment of children with disabilities. It highlights the risk of a large number of these children dropping out of schools due to the COVID-19 crisis, emphasizing the need for targeted interventions.

According to Unified District Information on School Education (UDISE+) of 2018-2019, India had 15,51,000 schools with 24,78,53,688 children attending across different states. Among these, 21,10,844 were children with disabilities. It also revealed that 2.3% of children were enrolled in schools in the country. However, both UDISE and UDISE + data consistently show low enrollment figures for children with disabilities over the years. The gender parity index for children with disabilities from 2014-2015 to 2018-19 indicates a constant but low ratio of girls with disabilities in the enrollment figures.

Chapter II:

Evaluation Goals:

An evaluation was initiated to assess the inclusive approach of the education project. The specific goals of the current evaluation were as follows:

- Determine the extent to which a learner centric environment has been created in the selected government primary schools;
- Determine the extent to which children with disabilities have been included and provided quality inclusive education in selected government schools;
- Assess the extent to which the project has strengthened the ownership of primary school education by decentralized education governance structures;
- Ascertain the extent to which the project objectives have been met and identify factors that have facilitated or impeded the progress towards meeting these objectives;
- Ascertain the percentage of learners who demonstrate improvement in learning outcomes;
- Provide inputs and suggestions on improving the design and implementation of the project.

Methods:

The evaluation goals served as the foundational framework for the research design, which adopted a mixed-methods approach to gather both quantitative and qualitative information from stakeholders. The data collection process encompassed both primary and secondary sources. Qualitative methods were employed to delve deeper into the experiences of secondary stakeholders concerning the Kalikayatna project and its various processes. The sample for the evaluation included a diverse group of stakeholders actively involved in the implementation of Kalikayatna.

The methodological features comprised the research design, sampling frame, sample selection, instrumentation, data sources, data collection procedures, and approaches for data processing and analysis. These methodological choices were made in consultation with Prajayatna, taking into consideration the feasibility of completing the study within the specified time schedule.

Qualitative tools were employed for conducting classroom observations and focus group discussions, aiming to comprehend diverse perspectives on the implementation of the Kalikayatna program and the engagement of local governance structures. Classroom observations were chosen as a method to gain insights into the actual implementation of the Kalikayatna approach at the school level. This approach allowed for a firsthand understanding of the extent to which the program was being put into practice within the classroom setting.

A sub-sample of 11 schools was randomly selected for classroom observations and learning outcome surveys. During the observations, one or two grades were observed at each sample school. The same cohort of students were part of the learning outcome survey at baseline and endline. These students were in grades 2 (referred to as Group A) and 3 (Group B) at baseline and in grades 4 and 5 during the endline study. These same schools also served as the unit for conducting qualitative discussions with other stakeholders such as parents, School Management Committee members, and Gram Panchayat (GP) members. Additionally, data gathered by Prajayatna for children with disabilities in these schools as part of regular assessments was analyzed to gain insights into the progress of these children.

The composition of different samples for the evaluation was determined through in-depth discussions with the Prajayatna team. Participants for the study were selected from stakeholders directly or indirectly involved in the Kalikayatna project. Primary data was collected at the school level, involving students and teachers participating in Kalikayatna. It was decided to include 15% of schools from each cluster in the sample. At the cluster level, schools with children with disabilities were purposively selected, and from among these, schools were further randomly chosen.

One teacher each from the sample school implementing the Quality Learning Initiative was selected to be administered the teacher survey. Classroom observations were also conducted to gather evidence related to the impact of the Kalikayatna processes at the school level.

Secondary data sources included stakeholders such as the School Management Committee members, Gram Panchayat Presidents, and other members, as well as parents of children with and without disabilities. These groups actively engaged in discussions at the school or cluster level, with each group consisting of 6-10 members. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were specifically conducted with parents, SMC members, and Gram Panchayat members at 11 schools. Data from students were collected at both the baseline and endline stages. Additionally, qualitative data, obtained through classroom observations, stakeholder interviews, and FGDs, was collected at three points in time: baseline, midline, and endline. This comprehensive data collection approach aimed to capture both quantitative and qualitative aspects, offered a nuanced understanding of the project's impact over time.

The following table captures the sampling frame for the baseline and endline assessments.

Table 1: Sampling Frame

Type	Sample	Total	Notes
Primary Data			
Schools	11	11	15 % coverage from each cluster. 4 clusters included- Asoha, Kapseti (Chitrakoot) and Badrauli and Bambhaura (Bahraich). Purposively sampled based on CWD population
Classroom Observations	11 schools	11	At least 1 CWD to be in the class
Teachers	72	73	Teachers who have been part of the Kalikayatna processes were administered the survey. Teachers being observed as part of classroom observations in the 11 sample schools also included for interviews.
Students	Bahraich- 182 Chitrakoot-120	302	Same cohort was administered the survey
Secondary Data			
SMC FGD	11 schools (5-8 members)	76	
GP FGD	11 schools (2 members)	36	Pradhan & 2 Standing Committee members
Parent FGD	11 schools (5-8 members)	83	At least 1 parent of CWD

The followings tools were used in the study to gather both quantitative and qualitative information from stakeholders

- Teacher Questionnaire: The tool captured information related to teacher experiences, awareness about the Kalikayatna processes, teaching-learning processes practiced by them, COVID-19 related issues, support received by them, assessment practices and challenges faced by them.
- Classroom Observation Schedule: This tool captured information related to classroom environment, teaching-learning practices, including differentiated instruction.
- Discussion guides for conducting FGDs with Gram Panchayat Presidents and members, Parents (of children with and without disabilities) and School Management Committees

  These tools captured stakeholder awareness about Prajayatna and the work undertaken by them in the project schools, awareness of challenges faced by children with disabilities, perception of their own roles with respect to education and understanding of changes brought about due to the intervention.
- Assessment test for literacy: The tool captures aspects related to reading with comprehension, decoding and phonological awareness
- Assessment test for numeracy: The tool captures aspects related to working with numbers up to 100, measurements, addition, subtraction, knowledge of time, value of currency etc.
- Test for non-scholastic competencies: This tool captures aspects related to capabilities of children in the domain of problem solving.

Baseline data was collected during the period of December 2021 to January 2022, midline data during November 2022 to January 2023 and endline data during November 2023. The Consultant also visited the project areas for qualitative data collection during these periods. The data collection team captured data based on the template shared by the consultant for different tools, entered the data and shared for further analysis. Only relevant data from quantitative and qualitative data sources were used for analysis. Quantitative data underwent cleaning using the R programming language. Excel was employed for data analysis, result generation, and representation through tables and graphs. Qualitative data underwent categorization into major themes, contributing to the interpretation of results in the report. Triangulation of information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, further enhanced the quality of analysis.

Chapter III:

A Snapshot of the Project Area:

The project is being implemented in two districts of Uttar Pradesh, namely Chitrakoot and Bahraich reaching out to a total of 5000 beneficiaries consisting of children of migrants, marginalised farmers, daily wage workers, out of school children and 500 children with disabilities. The project covers children from 75 government schools in these two districts in a total of 4 clusters. Uttar Pradesh is among the largest states of India with a high degree of educational backwardness. The state has the largest child population in the country among the age group of 5 to 14 years of age. The education ecosystem is marked by crumbling infrastructure of government schools, exodus of children from government schools to private schools, poor student-teacher ratio, poor transition rates from primary to upper primary stage of schooling, teacher absenteeism, poorly trained teacher workforce and low learning outcomes.

Project Districts:

Chitrakoot and Bahraich are both part of the country's 250 most backward districts as identified by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj in 2006. They are among the 34 districts in Uttar Pradesh currently receiving funds from the Backward Regions Grant Fund Programme (BRFG). More recently they have been part of NITI Aayog's 'Transformation of Aspirational Districts Programme'. Historically both these districts have been affected by a high degree of backwardness across different domains of development. However, in the recent past, their performances have been noteworthy. NITI Aayog's ranking released in August 2021 has put Chitrakoot at fifth place and Bahraich at seventh place in the field of development, especially on parameters like education, health and nutrition.

Figure 2: Map of the Project Area



Chitrakoot is one of the districts in the Bundelkhand region of Uttar Pradesh. Situated in the southern part of Uttar Pradesh bordering Madhya Pradesh, it is one the sparsely populated districts with a population of 9.91 lakhs. It is one of the most remote and cut-off districts in the country. The district has 5 blocks. It has a low literacy rate, an overall rate of 65.05% and 75.80% for men and 52.74% for women.

Bahraich lies in the northern part of Uttar Pradesh which borders Nepal. Minorities constitute 36% of the population of the district. The district is prone to annual flooding and consequently sees a lot of displacement and migration. It is a large district with 14 blocks and a population of 35 lakhs. It has a literacy rate of 49.32%, with a male literacy rate of 47.63% and female literacy rate of 31.64 %. Both the districts have improved school enrolments by over 80%, but quality of education provided remains poor. Prajayatna has been trying to address the issue by tackling systemic, political and community apathy by making them more accountable and to make the entire education system more responsive to the needs of children.

The Inclusive Education Programme in the district was launched to create a sustainable model where those with disabilities, out of school children, migrants etc continue to be in school and learn well. The programme envisaged to impact around 5000 children studying in 75 government schools in four blocks of the two districts. In the post COVID-19 scenario a large number of people who had migrated to other parts of the country for livelihood opportunities have returned to the districts, along with their children. These children need to be enrolled in school before they become child labourers themselves. In the backdrop of uncertainties due to the pandemic resulting

in overall disruptions to children and families and frequent school closures, the project aims at addressing various challenges that prevent children from participating in the educational processes in a decentralized manner.

At the core of the intervention are two aspects, a) strengthening of community structures such as school management committees and Panchayati Raj structures with participation of women, including participation from persons with disabilities or representatives from organisation of persons with disabilities and b) empowerment of teachers to ensure that the learning approach stresses on the process of learning.

The initiative looks at providing a holistic learning experience for the children and has certain aspects which include mixed age groups, integrated curriculum, continuous and comprehensive assessment of the children, group and individual learning activities. In order to facilitate such a process, the teachers are supported to develop their abilities to become facilitators. Blended learning approach is being adopted for continuation of the learning for children during emergencies and lockdown as well.

Chapter IV:

Findings:

Goal 1:

Determine the extent to which a learner centric environment has been created in the selected government primary schools;

The key features of the Kalikayatna is to provide a holistic learning environment for children studying in grades 1-5 using the following aspects:

- An integrated curriculum that goes beyond textbooks and one that focuses on concepts rather than subjects
- Organizing whole group and mixed age group activities along with Individual Practice Time
- Organizing Teacher Collectives
- Development of daily lesson plans by each individual teacher.
- Continuous and comprehensive assessment of children
- Maintaining Teacher Observation Book, Ongoing Portfolio for each student and Progress Card
- Using the available data for more effective planning of future classroom strategies and practices.

Data from several sources were assessed to understand the extent to which a learner centric environment has been created in the project schools. The focus of the project is to enable every child to have an access to education that will develop their inherent capabilities and help them reach their potential based on their learning pace and style. The focus is on building a child-centered learning environment where self-directed experiential learning processes are in place promoting independent thinking and decision making, collaboration, communication and greater empathy among children.

To understand the extent to which the Kalikayatna processes are being implemented in classrooms, data was collected from teachers across the project schools. Teachers from the sample schools were administered the teacher questionnaire. Three teachers who participated in the baseline had been transferred at endline, therefore the sample was reduced to 8. Insights gained from classroom observations are also used for analysis for this section.

In order to understand the impact of Prajayatna's impact on the classroom learning environment and teaching- learning processes, it is essential to gain insight into the broader learning climate within government primary schools in Uttar Pradesh. This is particularly pertinent in light of the introduction of the 'National Initiative for Proficiency

in Reading with Understanding and Numeracy' (NIPUN Bharat). The Uttar Pradesh government, aligning with the National Education Policy 2020 has established specific and measurable objectives for classes 1-5 across over 1.5 lakh schools in the state.

These goals focusing on literacy and numeracy, are outlined in a document referred to as Prerna Lakshya. Education department officials and teachers in the state consistently reference this document. Successful realization of the Lakshya implies that a child has successfully achieved all the specified learning outcomes as delineated in the comprehensive outcome framework. A novel learning outcome framework called Prerna Soochi has been created for grades 1-5, which encapsulates specific learning outcomes pertaining to foundational skills in literacy and numeracy. Each grade is equipped with tailored learning objectives, ensuring that the child is systematically instructed in essential foundational learning skills appropriate to the grade.

Schools have scheduled 120 minutes of instruction for Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) based on the recommended framework outlined in the foundational learning implementation guidelines called *Adharshila Kriyanvan Sandarshika*. Teachers in grades 1-3 adhere to these implementation guidelines, which offer specific guidance aligned with the *Prerna Soochi* for each grade and subject. This approach ensures clarity in teaching FLN skills by mapping learning outcomes throughout the academic year.

Prescriptive lesson plans, inclusive of activities and required resources, are provided in the implementation guide to support teachers in achieving the desired learning outcomes. Additionally, FLN-focused resources such as print-rich materials (posters and charts for literacy and numeracy), customized textbooks, and an 11-item math kit have been distributed to all primary schools, enhancing the richness of classroom resources. These materials are referenced in the implementation guides, providing clear instructions on their use during activities and instruction. This systematic approach guarantees that teachers have a clear understanding of 'what needs to be taught when' and 'which materials need to be utilized' at any given point in the teaching process.

To further support teachers, digital resources are shared weekly via WhatsApp by the *Sankul Shikshak* (Cluster Teacher). Teachers have undergone training, including video instructions on critical foundational learning concepts, and have participated in sessions conducted by Academic Resource Persons at the block level.

A progress tracking spreadsheet, known as the *Prerna Talika*, is implemented across grades 1-3 to systematically record and monitor the attainment of learning outcomes.

This ensures that milestones are documented and closely monitored. In addition to this, teachers are required to assess students in grades 1-3 using the centrally-based NIPUN Lakshya app, further enhancing the comprehensive approach to monitoring student progress.

These outcome-based initiatives are being implemented across the government primary schools of Uttar Pradesh. The implementation of Kalikayatna processes or the impact of these have to be viewed within this context.

The following table depicts the profile of these teachers:

Table 2: Profile of Teachers

Title	Parameters	Frequency (At Baseline)	Frequency (At Endline)
District	Chitrakoot	37	40
	Bahraich	35	33
Gender	Male	34	37
	Female	38	36
Educational Qualification	Undergraduate or below	1	0
	Graduate	24	21
	Post-graduate and above	47	52
Professional Qualification	Untrained	0	0
	D. Ed/ JBT	28	22
	B. Ed	40	49
Number of years of experience	1- 5 years	33	23
	6 - 9 years	23	31
	11 - 20 years	13	12

A total of 72 teachers participated in the survey at baseline, and this number increased to 73 by the endline. From the provided table, it is evident that the majority of teachers held post-graduate or graduate qualifications, supplemented with B.Ed or D.Ed credentials. The teaching staff exhibited considerable experience, spanning from 1- 5 years to 11-20 years. At baseline, 52.77% of survey participants were female, while at endline, this proportion decreased slightly to 49.31%.

Kalikayatna Orientation:

Figure 3: Understanding of Kalikayatna at baseline

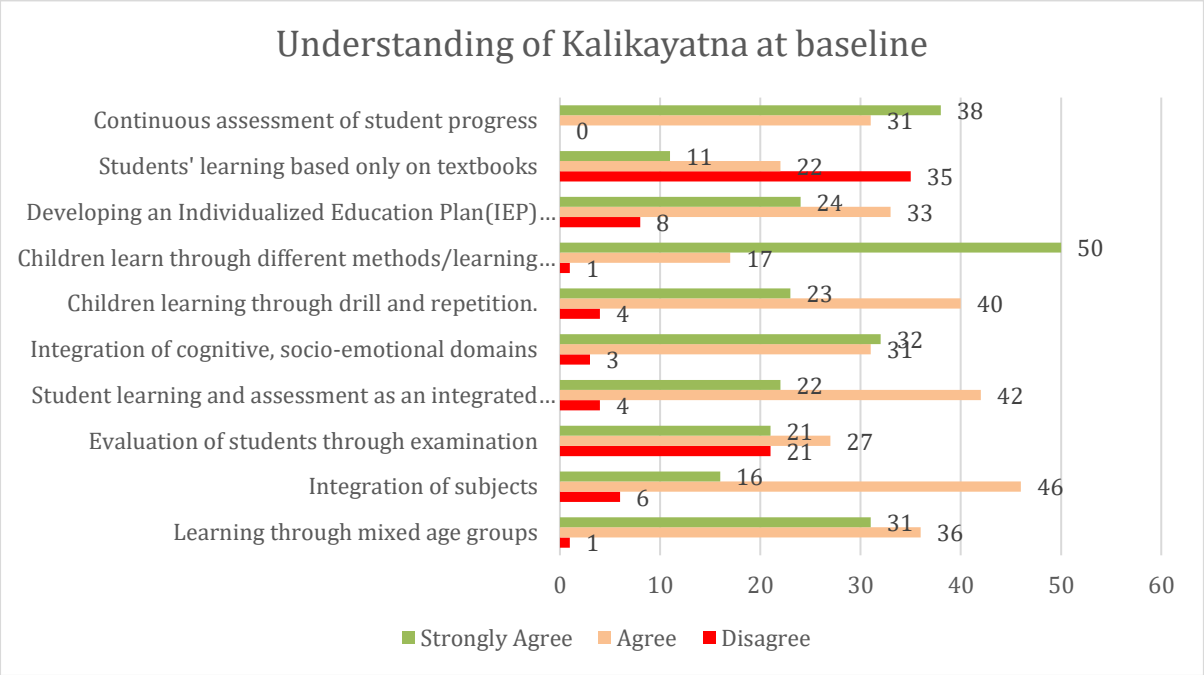
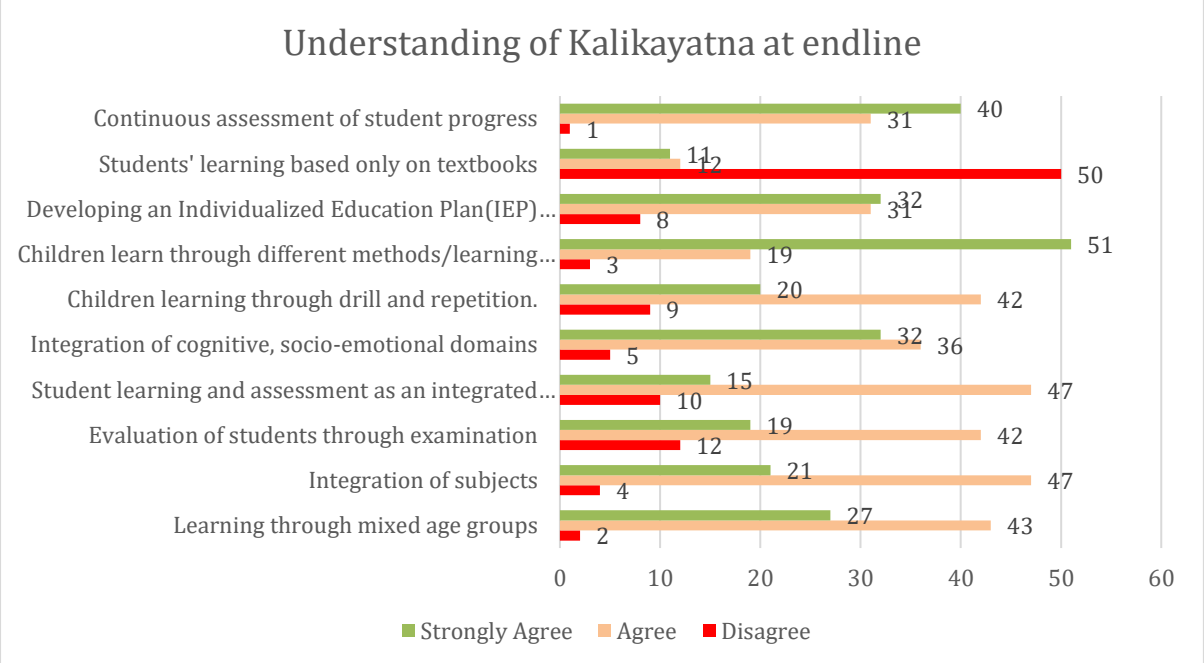


Figure 4: Understanding of Kalikayatna at endline



Among the 10 parameters, three—assessments of students through tests, children learning through drill and repetition, and student learning based solely on textbooks—were identified as not aligning with the Kalikayatna approach. The assumption was that teachers would be able to recognize and acknowledge these aspects as not integral to the Kalikayatna approach.

Learning through mixed age groups: As can be seen from the graphs, there is an increase in agreement and strongly agree responses from baseline to endline, indicating a growing acceptance or recognition of the effectiveness of mixed-age group learning.

Integration of subjects: The graphs above suggest a relatively consistent perception regarding the integration of subjects both at baseline and endline. There is only a slight decrease in disagreement and a small increase in agreement and strongly agree responses from baseline to endline.

Evaluation of students through examination: There is a decrease in disagreement and an increase in agreement at endline, indicating a shift towards more acceptance of evaluating students through examinations.

Student learning and assessment as an integrated process: There is a slight increase in disagreement and a notable increase in agreement and strongly agree responses at endline, suggesting a stronger recognition of integrating learning and assessment.

Integration of cognitive, socio-emotional domains: The distribution remains relatively consistent from baseline to endline, indicating a sustained perception regarding the integration of cognitive and socio-emotional domains.

Children learning through drill and repetition: There is an increase in disagreement and a slight decrease in agreement at endline, suggesting a shift away from perceiving children's learning through drill and repetition.

Children learn through different methods and learning styles: There is a slight increase in disagreement and agreement at endline, with a notable increase in strongly agree responses, indicating a stronger recognition of diverse learning methods.

Developing an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) for students with disabilities: The distribution remains relatively consistent from baseline to endline, indicating a sustained perception regarding the importance of developing IEPs for students with disabilities.

Students' learning based only on textbooks: There is a notable increase in disagreement at endline, suggesting a shift away from the perception of students' learning being solely based on textbooks.

Continuous assessment of student progress: The distribution remains relatively consistent from baseline to endline, indicating a sustained perception regarding the importance of continuous assessment of student progress.

Kalikayatna Implementation:

Table 3: Kalikayatna Implementation

Baseline															
Code	Using concept maps to teach students	Teaching through group work (whole/small group)	Using the state textbook	Providing time for each student to do individual work	Giving each student feedback on the work he/she has done	Using different materials to teach students	Sharing and reviewing each student's progress	To assess the progress of students through examinations 3-4 times a year.	Maintaining each student's portfolio	Paying attention to each student and encouraging them to participate.	Teaching English, Hindi and Mathematics separately for subject specific skills.	Observing each child to see how he or she is learning and then providing feedback	Ensuring participation of all students by working in groups, including children with disabilities	Creating Adaptations/ Environments for Students with Disabilities	Documenting each student's progress
not at all	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	5	1	1	0	4	7	1
once a week	24	5	3	6	2	3	18	30	23	4	5	4	5	3	18
3 to 4 times	36	48	31	27	25	32	29	19	27	26	28	27	26	22	31
everyday	7	16	35	37	43	35	22	10	7	39	34	39	26	30	16
Endline															
not at all	2	0	1	0	2	1	1	7	10	4	2	1	10	10	6
once a week	19	1	0	3	2	2	24	34	23	6	3	3	3	6	17
3 to 4 times	35	46	26	17	9	18	19	13	22	18	22	15	19	16	20
everyday	16	25	45	52	58	50	27	17	16	43	46	52	38	38	28

At the baseline, teachers frequently utilized concept maps, employing them either three times a week or daily. An increase in number of teachers who used it every day was noted at endline. Regarding different group work strategies such as whole-class instruction and small group work, the majority implemented these practices daily or 3 times a week. There was an increase noted for those who have been employing it on a daily basis. While textbooks continued to be a primary instructional tool, teachers diversified their materials, incorporating a print-rich environment, teaching-learning materials from Prajayatna and the department, digital resources, and more.

Although the majority of teachers reported planning for individual work either on a daily basis or three times a week, classroom observations reveal that, in practice, all teachers consistently provided dedicated time for individual work on a daily basis. A majority of teachers reported to providing time for each students to do individual work. At the endline, most teachers reported providing daily individual feedback and utilizing a variety of materials for instruction. Most teachers reported to maintaining students' work in their portfolio either once a week or 3- 4 times a week. Sharing and reviewing student progress were reported as occurring daily, once a week or three times a week.

Subjects like English, Hindi, and Maths, previously taught separately either daily or thrice a week, shifted to a daily basis. In terms of aspects such as attending to each child and fostering participation, as well as observing their learning and providing feedback, the frequency of these activities on a daily basis notably increased. The majority of teachers encouraged the participation of all children, including those with disabilities, either on a daily basis or three times a week, with these numbers showing an increase in daily frequency at endline.

Concerning differentiated instruction and opportunities for children with disabilities (CWDs), teachers claimed to implement them daily or thrice a week. However, in practice, all teachers appeared to provide opportunities for CWDs in every class on a daily basis. Some teachers reported that they do not practice differentiated instruction because they have no children with disabilities in their classrooms. Teachers employed various documentation formats for tracking progress, ranging from daily to weekly or thrice weekly, with daily documentation being the most favoured approach. It is crucial to interpret these findings with the understanding that these teachers were already part of Prajayatna processes at the baseline, having participated in the earlier pilot project.

Support provided by Prajayatna:

Prajayatna team has been working closely with teachers of the project schools at two levels. The first level of support is through the teacher collectives and the second, through on-site support provided by the Cluster Coordinator. While the collective meetings are a monthly affair, the cluster coordinator visits the school, two to three times in a month. The Inclusive Education Resource Teachers (IERT) also visits the schools to support teachers in the inclusion process, by providing support in curriculum adaptations for CWDs. The tables below summarizes the number of teacher collective meetings held.

Table 4: Teacher Collective Meetings- Bahraich

Bahraich

Year	**No. of Teacher Collectives**	**Teachers' Participation**		
		Male	Female	Total
2021	03	38	20	58
2022	10	83	112	195
2023	08	63	104	167
Total	**21**	**184**	**236**	**420**

Table 5: Teacher Collective Meetings- Chitrakoot

Year	**No. of Teacher Collectives**	**Teachers' Participation**		
		Male	Female	Total
2021	03	67	30	97
2022	09	67	74	141
2023	10	70	101	171
Total	**22**	**204**	**205**	**409**

A total of 43 meetings have been organized in both districts, bringing together nominated teachers for the Prajayatna project, IERT, and other department

officials.These are crucial inputs in ensuring that teachers receive support in the following aspects:

- Understanding the needs and requirements of students and planning how to provide need-based inputs
- Maintaining each student's profile and records
- Continuous assessment of students
- Improving student-parent partnership
- Overcoming student's problems
- Helping to understand the needs of children with disabilities
- Teaching students with disabilities
- Improving the environment of the school

Teachers from the project schools were also asked about the effectiveness of the on-site support provided by Prajayatna. The following graphs depict the nature of support provided by Prajaytna at baseline and endline.

Figure 5: Support provided by Prajayatna at Baseline

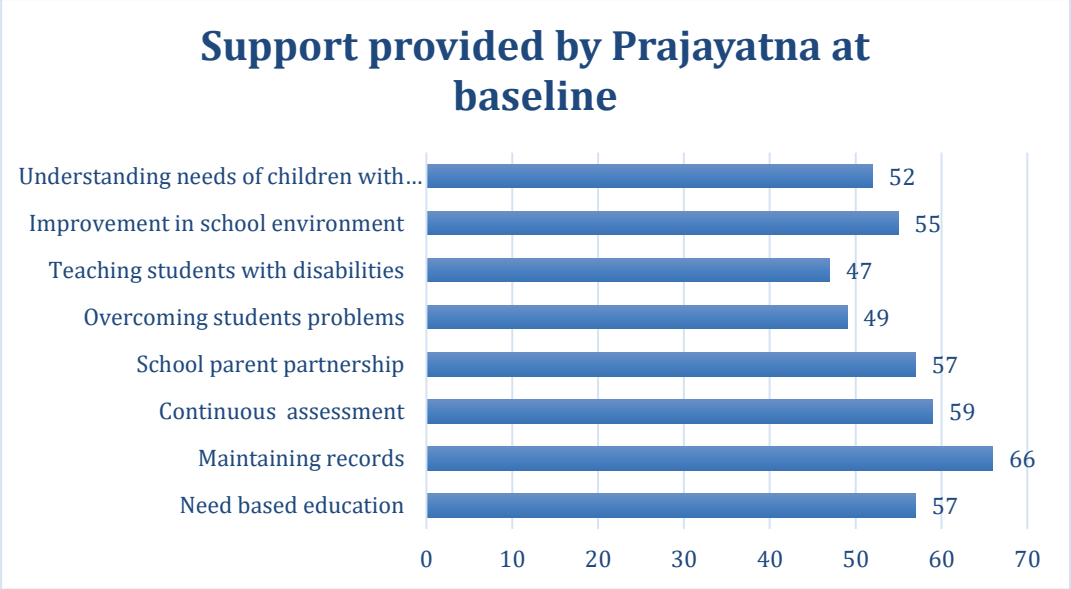
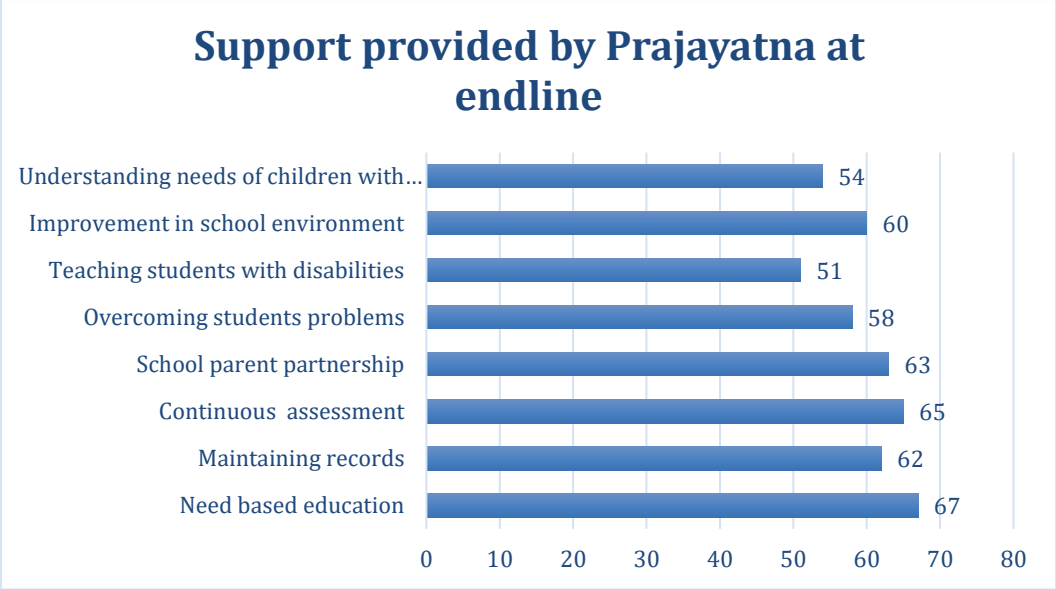


Figure 6: Support provided by Prajayatna at Endline



As depicted in the graphs, most teachers acknowledged Prajayatna's support in enhancing the school environment, fostering school-parent partnerships, implementing continuous assessment, maintaining records, and devising student-centered planning strategies. Furthermore, they found the duration of teacher collectives and the cluster coordinator's involvement to be suitable.

Integration of Kalikayatna in Classrooms:

After an initial period of confusion regarding the integration of FLN (Foundation Learning in Language) within the existing schooling system, there is now a growing clarity about aligning FLN outcomes with Kalikayatna. This clarity emerged as a result of collaborative efforts between Prajayatna and teachers, who worked together to align the curriculum with NIPUN outcomes. Once this alignment was successfully achieved, teachers found it easier to seamlessly integrate Kalikayatna processes into their regular classroom practices. A crucial step in the integration process was the realigned planning to consolidate grades 1 and 2 into one level and grades 3, 4, and 5 into another level, aligning with the NIPUN requirements. According to the project design, the instructional responsibilities were assigned to specific teachers, with one teacher designated for grades 1-2 and another for grades 3-5.

Based on the classroom observations and teacher interactions conducted by the evaluator, it appears that Kalikayatna is integrated into FLN classrooms in two fundamental ways:

- **Integration within regular instruction:**

Here, Prajayatna processes are seamlessly integrated into regular instruction within the FLN framework. Even when following FLN activities as per department guidelines, teachers incorporate Kalikayatna principles into their delivery. Various aspects of

Kalikayatna are applied, including curriculum integration focusing on concepts, utilization of different formats such as whole group instruction, small-group work, and individual work. Additionally, mixed age group activities, the use of concept maps, and creating inclusive opportunities for all children, including those with disabilities (CWDs), are emphasized. The approach involves tracking progress, documenting the progress of each child, and dividing classrooms to accommodate different grade levels (e.g., combining grades 1 and 2, and 3, 4, and 5).

This integrated approach is primarily undertaken by trained teachers. In schools with a shortage of trained teachers, the strategies are often limited to the classrooms of those who have received Kalikayatna training. However, some trained teachers share their knowledge with others, enabling the integration of these strategies into multiple classrooms. For example, if a Grade 1 teacher received training from Prajayatna, the FLN instruction involved the Grade 2 teacher actively observing and learning through practical experience. This approach facilitated knowledge transfer and skill acquisition, allowing teachers to collaborate and integrate Kalikayatna principles into their combined instruction for multiple grade levels.

- **Standalone Kalikayatna instruction post FLN**:

Some schools allocated a specific time for standalone Kalikayatna instruction, typically lasting two hours, either on a daily basis or a few times a week. This dedicated period is considered crucial for children's learning, and it is seen as an extension and deepening of understanding following the FLN class.

Teachers view Teacher Collective inputs as critical for student learning, and this standalone Kalikayatna instruction is seen as an opportunity to build on what has already been learned in FLN, providing a space for revision and a deeper exploration of concepts.

In summary, the integration of Kalikayatna into FLN classrooms showcases a dual approach, incorporating its principles within regular instruction and also as a standalone instructional period post-FLN. The success and extent of implementation often hinge on teacher training availability and the collaborative sharing of knowledge among educators within the school.

Teacher Capacity Building to work with Children with and without Disabilities:

Teacher Collectives play a central role in Prajayatna’s capacity-building strategy. These meetings are held at the Nyay Panchayat Resource Centre (NPRC) for the ongoing capacity building process of teachers. At the cluster level, teachers come together in peer groups to collaborate on various aspects. Teachers nominated under

the Kalikayatna project are required to participate in these collective meetings as a monthly commitment. These meetings take place once a month, providing a consistent and structured platform for ongoing collaboration and professional development.

The establishment of Teacher Collectives faced initial delays due to COVID-19 restrictions. Even during this phase, Prajayatna prioritized on-site training, concentrating on classroom observations, demonstrations, and feedback. The initial emphasis was primarily on attaining foundational literacy and numeracy, fostering other competencies in children, implementing strategies for accommodating children with disabilities, and effectively utilizing inclusive learning materials and Teaching-Learning Materials (TLMs). Additionally, the focus extended to the development of Individualized Education Plans. As the academic year progressed, Teacher Collectives were successfully institutionalized in both locations.

Teachers take turns attending these meetings based on the grade level for which planning is held, ensuring a comprehensive and collaborative approach to professional development.

They support each other in developing concept maps and monthly learning plans, share challenges, and collectively find solutions based on their classroom needs. The objective is to ensure the active participation of all students in the learning process. Teachers also engage in the preparation of resources and aids to support the learning process. This creative space serves not only for crafting new learning materials but also for designing exposure activities. Importantly, it becomes a platform for formulating strategies to effectively teach children with disabilities and facilitate their inclusion in the classroom.

These collectives have proven instrumental in helping teachers refine their planning and facilitation skills. Through shared discussions, teachers reflect on curriculum objectives, content, outcomes, and necessary resources for effective classroom engagement. This collaborative effort contributes to improved session planning, content organization, and assessment strategies, fostering a sense of ownership in their teaching and learning processes.

The collective meetings serve as a platform for showcasing innovative approaches that have proven successful for fellow teachers. They also provide an opportunity to delve into the details of the Kalikayatna approach. Importantly, these meetings offer a chance for teachers to present their monthly learning plans, seek advice for overcoming challenges in their classrooms, and receive constructive feedback.

The Teacher Collective meeting stands out as the sole institutionalized capacity-building initiative in these districts, aside from the Shikshak Sankul Baithak organized by the education department. The Teacher Collective is a critical input in building the

NPRC- a centre offering academic input, teacher training and a platform for meeting and learning from each other. The Nyay Panchayat Resource Centre Coordinators (NPRCC) at both locations consider Prajayatna's contributions as the primary factor in fostering a congenial environment for teachers at the cluster level to learn about strategies for enhancing the classroom environment, student participation and improving the learning levels of children. Notably, the education department has refrained from sanctioning capacity-building programs by NGOs for teachers in recent years. Given this context, the successful institutionalization of Teacher Collectives is a remarkable achievement for Prajayatna.

Changes in the learning environment:

Irrespective of the Kalikayatna implementation format at schools, teachers have universally incorporated certain changes in the classroom. These changes include adopting a teaching approach that is innovative and that involves whole group instruction, followed by smaller group activities and individual practice. Students were organized in smaller groups to reinforce or practice what has been taught in the whole group instruction. Teachers were found to spend time with each group, clarifying and checking for understanding, correcting and helping children. These methodologies emphasize student-centric approaches, integration of various subjects, and activity-based learning.

Another noteworthy trend observed across classrooms and schools is a shift away from rote learning towards joyful learning that focuses on learning with understanding. In classrooms with children with disabilities (CWDs), there is a clear emphasis on aligning learning with Individualized Education Plans (IEP) and providing individual attention. CWDs are actively included in all group activities to the extent possible.

Assessment:

While teachers acknowledge the importance of continuous and comprehensive assessment for monitoring student progress, this acknowledgment does not consistently translate into practice among most of them. This observation is substantiated by classroom visits, where although many teachers maintain Teacher Observation Books, the practice of recording students' progress during or after class was not observed.

Initially, the idea of maintaining student portfolios for recording progress was discussed by Prajayatna. However, with the implementation of FLN and *NIPUN Lakshya* tracking, this concept was abandoned. Teachers, facing the requirement for multiple assessments, decided to use workbooks provided by Prajayatna as portfolios

to be maintained at school. Despite teachers demonstrating a solid understanding of each child's abilities, there is currently no systematic method for capturing this information. Periodically assessing teachers' capabilities in conducting assessments and addressing challenges becomes crucial to ensure meaningful and continuous tracking of students' progress.

Prajayatna adopts a comprehensive approach to track children across various learning domains, encompassing academic learning, socio-emotional learning, and physical well-being/motor development. This assessment is conducted annually and shared with parents. While this holistic assessment was carried out in the initial two years, it was not conducted in 2023 due to the busy schedule of teachers and students' involvement in multiple assessments.

Goal 2:

Determine the extent to which children with disabilities have been included and provided quality inclusive education in selected government schools;

Enrolment of Children with Disabilities:

Prajayatna undertook the identification of children with disabilities through cluster level data and household surveys in the four project clusters. Detailed information was captured regarding the child, parental background, type of disability, issues faced, enrolment status, certification, camps attended, need for aids/assistive devices and if given were tapped. The following table captures details of CWDs identified and their school enrolment status.

An important strategy followed by Prajayatna is conducting home visits to sensitize and involve parents in the education of children with disabilities. Typically home visits ensured a) identification of children with disabilities and understanding their background, needs and requirements, b) sensitizing parents about the needs, schemes, provisions and type of disability their child has, c) providing support to parents once their child is enrolled through information about camps, check –ups, certification and educational support, d) developing a bond between the school teacher, parents and SMCs and e) assessing the performance of children with disabilities and developing an IEP in collaboration with the parent, teacher and the Prajayatna facilitator and the teacher using the same to include that the child is included in the learning process.

A total of 203 children have been identified in the two districts. Details are presented separately for each district as below:

Table 6: Identification and Enrolment of CWDs in Bahraich

Class	Disability										Grand Total		Total
	Orthopedically Handicapped (OH)		Visual Impairment (VI)		Hearing Impairment (HI)		Intellectual Disability (ID)		Multiple Disability (MD)				
	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	
1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
2	2	3	1	0	2	1	5	4	1	1	11	9	20
3	0	2	0	0	2	1	3	2	2	0	7	5	12
4	2	0	0	0	2	1	2	1	0	1	6	3	9
5	1	3	0	0	2	1	4	2	2	1	9	7	16
6	0	1	0	0	0	0	3	0	2	2	5	3	8
7	2	2	1	3	4	3	0	2	2	1	9	11	20
8	2	1	1	1	1	3	1	1	0	0	5	6	11
9	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	2	3
10	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	3	1	4
11	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Anganwadi	9	2	2	2	1	0	2	0	0	0	14	4	18
Not Enrolled	1	2	1	1	0	0	1	0	3	0	6	3	9
TOTAL	23	16	6	8	15	12	21	12	13	7	78	55	133

As presented above, 124 out of 133 identified children with disabilities have been enrolled during the project period into *anganwadis* or local primary schools, in the villages where these children reside.

Table 7: Identification and Enrolment of CWDs in Chitrakoot

Class	Disability										Grand Total		Total
	Orthopedically Handicapped (OH)		Visual Impairment (VI)		Hearing Impairment (HI)		Intellectual Disability (ID)		Multiple Disability (MD)				
	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	
1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	2	3	5
2	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	3	0	3
3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	3	0	3
4	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	2	3	5
5	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	1	3
6	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	3	1	4
7	0	2	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	4	5
8	1	2	1	0	1	1	0	0	3	0	6	3	9
9	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
10	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	2
11	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
Anganwadi	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	3	3	6
Not Enrolled	4	1	0	0	5	2	1	3	5	1	15	7	22
TOTAL	11	12	3	1	9	6	5	3	16	4	44	26	70

In the case of Chitrakoot, it is observed that out of the 70 children identified with disabilities, 48 children have been successfully enrolled in *anganwadis* or local primary schools. However, there are challenges noted for some older children, particularly

those aged 16 years and above, and those with severe disabilities who are unable to move. Unfortunately, these children have not been enrolled in schools.

This highlights a gap in the enrollment process, especially for older children and those with more severe disabilities. Addressing these challenges and finding alternative education or support methods for these specific cases may be crucial to ensuring inclusivity and access to education for all children, regardless of age or disability severity.

Table 8: Overall Enrollment of CWDs by Prajayatna

CWD Enrollment	2021		2022		2023	
	Bahraich	Chitrakoot	Bahraich	Chitrakoot	Bahraich	Chitrakoot
Primary School	7	3	8	1	3	3
Upper Primary Schools	8	5	9	4	5	3
Anganwadi	2	0	4	0	8	0
Referral	0	1	5	4	3	0
Total	17	9	26	9	19	6

As can be seen from the above table, Prajayatna has facilitated the enrolment of 86 children with disabilities across both locations. These children have been enrolled into primary schools, upper-primary schools, *anganwadis* or referred to other institutions.

Entitlements:

The following tables depict the entitlements made available to children with disabilities in Bahraich and Chitrakoot. Overall, Prajayatna supported children to receive around 460 entitlements such as enrollment in schools, disability certification, AADHAR card, escort allowance, assistive devices based on the type of disability, stipend, opening bank accounts and tablets.

Table 9: Entitlements for CWDs in Bahraich

District	Enrolment in Primary School	Enrolment in Upper Primary/ High School	Certification	AADHAR Card	Escort Allowance	Disability	Assistive Device	Device Type	Stipend	Bank Account	E-Therapy	Tablet
BAHRAICH	18	32	95	6	12	OH	CP Chair	1	13	16	79	2
							Shoes	4				
							Walker	1				
							Tricycle	12				
							Wheelchair	5				
						VI	Smart Cane	2				
							Braille Kit	8				
						CP	CP Chair	2				
							Wheelchair	8				
							Tricycle	2				
						ID	MSIED Kit	2				
							MR Kit	5				
							CP Chair with Commode	1				
						HI	Hearing Aid	23				
						MD	Wheelchair	1				
							Shoes	1				

Table 10: Entitlements for CWDs in Chitrakoot

District	Enrolment in Primary School	Enrolment in Upper Primary/ High School	Certification	AADHAR Card	Escort Allowance	Disability	Assistive Device	Device Type	Stipend	Bank Account	E-Therapy
CHITRAKOOT	**7**	**12**	**13**	**6**	**10**	**HI**	**13**	Hearing Aid	**11**	**4**	**12**
						ID	**7**	MR kit			
						MD	**6**	MR kit			
							1	Wheelchair			
							6	Tricycle			
						OH	**9**	Tricycle			
							2	Wheelchair			
							3	Caliper			
						VI	**2**	Spectacles			
							1				

Differentiated Instruction in Classrooms:

Teacher Behaviour:

In most instances, teachers demonstrated a commendable commitment to inclusivity by actively involving students with disabilities in various tasks and discussions. They consistently adhered to Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) for students with disabilities and incorporated manipulatives and aids in their teaching methods. Furthermore, teachers fostered a collaborative environment by encouraging students with disabilities to work alongside their peers. Notably, teachers tailored tasks to align with individual student abilities, showcasing a thoughtful and personalized approach. The observed practice of providing additional time and attention, when necessary,

reflects the teachers' dedication to supporting students with difficulties. Overall, these practices align with the guidance provided by Prajayatna for effectively integrating children with disabilities into regular classrooms.

However, in some cases, it was evident that the teachers required further inputs in teaching children with disabilities, particularly those with vision and hearing impairments.

Student Behaviour:

During classroom observations, it was evident that students were actively engaged in their tasks and participated in discussions with their peers and teachers. At the end of smaller group activities, students shared their ideas and discussions with the entire class. The evaluator noticed a comfortable and open atmosphere in classrooms, where children interacted with teachers without hesitation. In most classrooms visited, students were enthusiastic about participating in discussions, eagerly raising their hands to answer questions. Topics closer to their lives, such as festivals, village life, food etc,sparked rich and lively discussions. Each child eagerly shared their experiences and understanding of the topic.

When teachers assigned tasks on the board, whether solving arithmetic problems or writing in Hindi and English, students displayed enthusiasm. Whenever clarification was needed on a task or topic, students sought guidance from the teacher. Group work was a common practice, providing students with the opportunity to discuss tasks and concepts collaboratively. The culmination of small group activities allowed students to share their ideas and work with the rest of the class.

A noteworthy observation was the high level of collaboration among students, with a particular emphasis on supporting children with disabilities (CWD). Importantly, there was a distinct absence of discrimination, labeling, ignoring, bullying, or abuse faced by these children.

Resource Centre for CWDs:

The district level Resource Centres have been set up in collaboration with the Education Department in both districts. In Chitrakoot and Bahraich, there are 1,700 and 8,800 differently-abled children enrolled in schools, respectively. The Resource Center in Chitrakoot was set up in January 2023, and in Bahraich in November 2022.

The primary objectives of the Resource Centers include providing counseling to the parents of differently-abled children and addressing challenges associated with various disabilities. The centers foster collaboration with local physicians, special

educators, and department officials to build relationships and overcome obstacles faced by these children in terms of both learning and personal development. Eventually, the resource centers are envisioned to serve as rehabilitation centers that offer information about disabilities and establish linkages to stimulate the growth of services and implement strategies for rehabilitation.

The Resource Centers specifically focus on physiotherapy for children and are equipped with resources such as physiotherapy stairs, a kids' gym, jump tools, gym balls, massage tools, and balancing beams. The centers operate with the support of specialized teachers, IERTs provided by the department to ensure effective functioning and timely assistance. Ideally the resource centres should be able to provide the services of Physio-therapist, Occupational Therapist, Speech Therapist and Clinical /Rehabilitation Psychologist to children with disabilities. However, in these remote locations, it is hard to find qualified professionals for occupational therapy, speech, rehabilitation etc.

The key outcomes seen after the setting up of the resource centres are as below:

- Parental Counseling: The provision of counseling to parents of CWDs is expected to increase awareness and understanding of the challenges faced by their children, potentially leading to more informed decisions and better support systems at home.
- Collaboration with Professionals: Through collaboration with local physicians, special educators, and department officials, the Resource Centers have established a network of support for CWDs, comprehensively addressing their specific needs and challenges.
- Enhanced Learning Opportunities: The focus on physiotherapy and the provision of specialized resources in the Resource Centers contribute to creating an environment where differently-abled children can access enhanced learning opportunities, positively impacting their physical and cognitive development.
- Timely Assistance: The involvement of specialized teachers ensures that children receive timely and appropriate assistance, addressing challenges promptly and fostering a supportive learning environment.

In the district of Chitrakoot, 20 children have benefited from the initiative, and in Bahraich, 6 children are benefiting from the program.

The effectiveness of the resource centers relies heavily on the effectiveness of the specialized teachers, Inclusive Education Resource Teachers (IERTs). Presently, these government special educators face challenging working conditions, where each teacher is expected to handle CWDs from approximately 70 schools at the block level, necessitating extensive travel. At present, Bahraich district has 32 IERTs and Chitrakoot, 12 This situation makes it nearly impossible for them to provide onsite

support to teachers and CWDs at schools or for home-based education. However, during the project period, the Prajayatna team has worked with IERTs to ensure that they visit home-based CWDs at least once a month. However, there is an urgent need to enhance individualized support to CWDs in schools and at home.

The National Education Policy (NEP) introduces complexities in the concept of school choice for children with disabilities through the implementation of school complexes and school rationalization policies. Under this plan, schools within a 5-10-kilometer radius will be consolidated within one school complex, aiming to ensure sufficient resources for children with disabilities, including resource centers and special educators. This approach addresses a critical issue— the acute shortage of special educators, who often need to cover children across 150 schools at the block level, necessitating extensive travel.

Goal 3:

Assess the extent to which the project has strengthened the ownership of primary school education by decentralized education governance structures

Prajayatna has been actively working to decentralize education governance structures by concentrating on enhancing the capacities of local community structures to address school development issues. Their efforts have been centered on building the capabilities of Panchayati Raj Institutions and School Management Committees. Trainings have been conducted for key elected representatives at the Gram Panchayat level. The involvement of the Departments of Education and Rural Development is integral, with active engagement in addressing school and education governance-related issues and concerns through Prajayatna processes.

The capacity-building efforts have primarily aimed at cultivating an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of local stakeholders, emphasizing the provision of quality education for all, with a specific focus on Children With Disabilities. Prajayatna's processes have been designed to empower local education governance structures to address issues impacting children with disabilities comprehensively. This includes ensuring optimal provision of facilities, entitlements, and promoting inclusive education for every child with a disability. To assess the effectiveness of these structures, focus group discussions were conducted with three distinct groups: members of the Gram Panchayat, School Management Committees, and parents of both children with and without disabilities.

These discussions occurred at the school level across all 11 schools included in the sample during both the baseline and endline assessments. Additionally, the evaluator held meetings with stakeholders from at least 4 schools during midline and endline evaluations. Consultation with the Gram Panchayat involved typically the Pradhan and

Shiksha Samiti members. On the other hand, for SMC meetings , there were usually 6-8 members present. Similarly, parent consultations at each school involved the participation of 6-10 parents.

There were 3-4 dimensions that were explored through the focus group discussions- a) awareness about the programme, b) knowledge about their role in education, c) knowledge about challenges faced by children with disabilities and d) perceptions about the programme.

A rating of the SMCs and GPs were conducted at endline to understand the progress of these two institutions. The process involved the Pyrajayatna team rating these institutions based on their ongoing interactions and progress made by them. the tool explores various aspects such as formation, quality of meetings, planning, implementation and review, resource allocation and management,

Gram Panchayats:

The appointment of the new Gram Panchayats (GP) in May 2021 also coincided with the initiation of the project. During the baseline evaluation, all the Gram Panchayats were new, and Prajayatna had not been able to organize formal trainings or orientations due to COVID. Consequently, members from three Gram Panchayats, namely Chakjafar, Katragudar, and Alipur, had not been part of Prajayatna processes. However, individual interactions were held with GP members regarding educational support to children during COVID. Despite the absence of formal training, several GP members demonstrated awareness of Prajayatna's work in the communities.

Even at baseline, Panchayats showed a keen awareness of the need to support children with disabilities, expressing the view that CWDs should have the same opportunities as others. They believed that Panchayats could assist CWDs by persuading parents to send children to schools, disseminating information about government facilities for such children, and helping enroll them in schools. However, they were unable to articulate the challenges faced by CWDs and their families. Most members were aware of CWDs in their Panchayats.

Regarding the roles of the Gram Pradhan and Shiksha Samiti, most Panchayat members mentioned responsibilities related to enrolling children in schools, maintaining schools, conducting repairs and maintenance of school buildings and facilities, and resolving school-related issues. However, there was a significant segment of members in at least 5 Panchayats who were unable to articulate the specific role of the Pradhan.

With regard to the Panchayat's role in education, members listed various responsibilities, including sensitizing parents about sending children to school, ensuring proper facilities in schools, functional toilets, drinking water, teacher punctuality, timely distribution of well-balanced mid-day meals, fostering good teacher-student interactions, ensuring quality teaching, and resolving school-related issues. However, more than half of the respondents were not aware of how they could support the School Management Committees (SMCs).

Those who mentioned working closely with SMCs did so by participating in SMC-organized programs, ensuring timely organization of SMC meetings, distribution of Mid-Day Meals (MDM), monitoring teaching-learning processes in schools, and ensuring the availability of uniforms. However, most of these members had not attended any meetings organized by SMCs.

In cases where School Management Committees (SMCs) were formed and functional, Panchayat members highlighted several benefits. They mentioned that SMC meetings provided a platform for discussing school-related issues. Through SMCs, schools were able to address various repair needs, ensure the timely distribution of Mid-Day Meals (MDM), organize neighborhood classes (mohalla classes), and improve teacher attendance and teaching quality in classrooms. Members perceived that the interaction between the Gram Pradhan and teachers resulted in improved teacher attendance. Overall, there was better interaction between SMCs and Gram Panchayats, increased involvement in budget discussions, transparency in school functioning, and timely maintenance of school facilities, leading to effective teaching practices.

By midline and endline, there was increased engagement of Gram Panchayats (GPs) in the education process. In both districts, cluster-level workshops were conducted for Education Standing Committees (Shikshak Samiti) to familiarize them with their roles and responsibilities. Subsequently, GP-level meetings were organized to deliberate on the Panchayat's role in education, addressing issues related to schools and *anganwadis*, and developing action plans. GP-level network meetings were also convened, bringing together GP Pradhans, members, Education Standing Committee members, SMC members, and teachers to discuss school-related matters and receive information on initiatives like Balsuraksha Samiti, Childline, The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, etc. In most instances, participants were acquainted with their responsibilities in supporting children with disabilities. They found these meetings valuable as they received information on enhancing education quality, raising community awareness on education.

The evaluator visited the same Gram Panchayats during midline and endline evaluations, providing insights into the orientation of these Panchayats and their role in education. All Gram Panchayats were not only aware but also highly appreciative

of Prajayatna's intervention. Gram Panchayat members perceive their role in education as vital for the development of primary education. Education is viewed as a crucial tool that fosters a sense of responsibility among Panchayats towards the well-being of their children. The predominant role is seen as one of activation and implementation of primary education, emphasizing the need to take charge of children's education.

There appeared to be an evolving understanding of the Gram Panchayat's role in addressing infrastructural issues in schools, supporting enrollment, providing entitlements and facilities to children with disabilities and ensuring regular attendance of students and teachers. Additionally, there were efforts towards parental orientation on the specific needs of CWDs, including certification, the use of assistive devices, Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), the utilization of therapy videos, and facilitating completion of schooling with a transition to higher education.

Local planning is conducted through participatory processes involving *anganwadis* and schools, with the Gram Panchayat playing a central role. This approach allows for a comprehensive understanding of the challenges faced by children in their schooling and overall development. The Gram Panchayat demonstrates a clear commitment to ensuring that all children, including those with disabilities, have equitable access to entitlements and schemes. This commitment is exemplified through the proactive role played by the Gram Panchayat in addressing challenges specific to children with disabilities, ensuring their access to entitlements and necessary support.

The Gram Panchayats have made significant contributions, particularly in improving school infrastructure. The visible improvements, observed during project school visits, were facilitated through "Operation Kayakalp," a Government of Uttar Pradesh initiative that allocates funds to the Gram Panchayat for school repair and maintenance. The rejuvenation efforts included constructing boundary walls, ensuring safe and clean drinking water, installing piped water systems, providing hand washing units, and building kitchen sheds. In cases where Kayakalp funds were depleted, few Gram Panchayats utilized budget allocations from Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act or discretionary funds from the 14th Finance Commission.

Some Gram Panchayats undertook initiatives to establish new Panchayat Bhavans, *anganwadi* centers, CWD-friendly community toilets, and play equipment for schools. However, securing funding for these activities presented a challenge. Certain Gram Panchayats expressed a sentiment of being relegated to the role of mere contractors in the village development process, lacking real power in planning and implementation based on genuine needs. While most Gram Panchayats maintained strong links with schools, there were instances where the Gram Panchayat, especially the Pradhan,

did not take the lead in improving school conditions. In such cases, schools and SMCs felt hindered by unresponsive Gram Panchayat Pradhans.

While most Gram Panchayats successfully enrolled children, including those with disabilities (CWDs) and out-of-school children, a particular challenge that many GPs faced was addressing the needs of children of seasonal migrants. Most GPs had not developed strategies to retain migrant children within their families or implement remediation or targeted strategies upon their return. Another concern raised by GPs was teacher absenteeism, with many expressing that maintaining a strong link with schools and conducting regular visits had significantly reduced this issue. Another ongoing challenge was the irregular attendance of several children in schools, evident during the evaluator's visits, where significant student absenteeism was observed across project schools. Some Shiksha Samitis of the Panchayats reported benefiting from capacity-building inputs from Prajayatna, especially in shaping their perspectives on education.

Gram Panchayat Rating:

Prajayatna team provided ratings to the Gram Panchayats (GPs) based on their ongoing interactions. The following rating system was used:

- Rating of 3 indicates Fully-functional
- Rating of 2 indicates Poorly-functional
- Rating of 1 indicates Non-functional

These ratings were assigned to the 11 GPs that were part of the sample.

Table 11: Gram Panchayat Rating

Gram Panchayat	G1	G2	G3	G4	G5	G6	G7	G8	G9
Pachokhr	3	2	3	3	2	3	3	3	3
Rehuta	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Karmullapur	1	2	3	3	2	2	3	1	3
Bhabhaey	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	3
Chandragahna	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Alinagar	1	2	3	3	2	3	3	2	3
Dilaura	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	3
Badrauli	1	2	3	3	2	3	3	2	3
Kohli	1	2	3	3	2	3	3	2	3
Chulumbha	1	2	3	3	2	3	3	2	3

Table 12: Dimensions of Gram Panchayat Rating

Dimension	Headings
Constitution of Standing Committee	G1
Planning for development of school	G2
Implementation and review	G3
Resource allocation	G4
Resource mobilization	G5
Support to schools	G6
Redressal mechanism	G7
Collaboration between SMC and Gram Panchayat	G8
Involvement in ensuring learning in school	G9

The table indicates that most Gram Panchayats (GPs) have made positive progress in assessed parameters, but there are areas where they require intensive support and guidance. Key findings include:

- Standing Committee on Education: 5 out of 11 GPs had not constituted a Standing Committee on Education.
- Involvement in Planning: While most GPs were involved in planning for education, the level of involvement was suboptimal for 6 GPs.
- Implementation, Review, and Resource Allocation: GPs were rated fully-functional in these areas.
- Resource Mobilization: 8 out of 11 GPs found it challenging to secure funds for various development work.
- Support to Schools and Redressal Mechanisms: GPs were fully-functional in providing support to schools and implementing redressal mechanisms.
- Collaboration with SMCs: There was room for improvement in collaboration with School Management Committees (SMCs).
- Involvement Ensuring Learning in School: GPs scored better in this area, indicating active participation in ensuring learning outcomes in schools.

School Management Committees:

The Right to Education Act of 2009 recognizes the School Management Committee as a crucial component, particularly for fostering community participation in primary education. Ongoing initiatives at the Panchayat level focus on enhancing the capacities of School Management Committees. These committees receive regular

training on diverse subjects, actively contributing to the development of work plans at the school level and ensuring the quality of monthly SMC meetings.

All School Management Committees were established in 2020 during the school closures, with many formed without following due process. Although no formal trainings were conducted by Prajayatna, individual interactions did occur, particularly in the context of the pandemic and the learning needs of children. At the time of baseline evaluation, SMC members from all schools except three had heard of Prajayatna. Their understanding of Prajayatna was that of an organization that worked on education with a special focus on children with disabilities. They understood Prajayatna's efforts in getting benefits and entitlements for CWDs. Members from more than half the schools had attended meetings organized by Prajayatna where the organization personnel discussed the hardships caused due to Covid-19, precautions communities need to take and ways in which to address learning losses and so on.

Due to prolonged school closures during the Covid-19 pandemic, School Management Committees were limited in discussing observed changes at the school level. However, they emphasized that the mohalla classes conducted by Prajayatna and the educational material support provided by them were crucial factors in sustaining children's education during the pandemic. SMC members also acknowledged Prajayatna's contribution to enrolling all children with disabilities in communities into schools and ensuring they receive the entitlements due from various agencies. They noted increased awareness among parents of CWDs about various schemes and aids available for their children. Additionally, SMC members highlighted improved attendance of children once schools reopened after the Covid-19 closures. They also discussed positive observations related to learning progress, including children learning well, enhanced reading abilities in Hindi and English, active participation in discussions, and a better understanding of routines and school.

Due to the pandemic, most School Management Committees were either not functional or poorly functional. It was evident that SMC meetings were disrupted, and many SMCs had not been reconstituted. The members who were represented through the focus groups were largely from the erstwhile SMCs prior to COVID-19. Their role was largely relegated to discussing and resolving issues related to basic issues of infrastructure given the circumstances.

SMC members expressed the desire for all children with disabilities to be enrolled in school, receiving equal opportunities to learn and succeed in life. They believed that creating individualized learning plans for CWDs based on their abilities would enhance their learning. SMC members felt they could play a crucial role in supporting parents to enroll their children in schools, ensuring that children receive medical benefits, necessary equipment, and other entitlements.

At midline, when the evaluator visited the project schools, Prajayatna had conducted various processes with the newly formed SMCs. SMCs were active and participated in the school development processes. School level meetings held to orient them about the various roles and responsibilities w.r.t children and education- attendance, bridging learning gaps owing to Covid-19, inclusive learning environment at school, supporting, enrolment, learning and other needs of CWDs, supporting children in their learning at home, regular school visits and interactions with teachers, maintenance and upkeep of school premises, planning for school infrastructure and so on. In the newly formed SMCs (16), a parent of CWD has also been included.

Subsequently, a training program was organized at the Nyaya Panchayat level, encompassing over 500 participants across different phases in both districts. The training focused on the functions and responsibilities of School Management Committees, children's rights, planning activities at the school level, and ensuring the quality of monthly committee meetings. The District Education Officer actively participated in these training sessions. Additionally, video sessions were also organized for the SMCs on various topics, including child rights and the NEP.

At the endline assessment, School Management Committees were observed to be actively engaged in the school development processes. Special emphasis was placed on ensuring the inclusion of parents of children with disabilities in the committee if their child was enrolled in a specific school. This inclusive strategy extended to parents of differently-abled children from 12 schools in Chitrakoot district and 11 schools in Bahraich district. The involvement of parents addressed critical issues, including the provision of ramps, accessible toilets, enrollment procedures, regular attendance, and the utilization of various government schemes designed for differently-abled children.

SMCs have achieved notable successes, particularly in increasing school attendance among irregular students, thus reducing the risk of dropouts. SMC members have consistently worked with families of irregular students, encouraging them to attend school. They have played a crucial role in ensuring that Direct Benefit Transfer reaches all students, providing entitlements such as textbooks, uniforms, and transport allowances. Additionally, all SMCs have been actively involved in enhancing the physical infrastructure of schools, resulting in an overall improvement in the school environment.

SMC meetings are held once a month across all project schools. In cases where there is close coordination between SMCs and GPs, various infrastructure projects have been successfully completed, including the construction of boundary walls, toilets, ground leveling, interlocking of roads, ramp maintenance, handwashing unit, and the

installation of hand pumps. An example from Karmullapur Panchayat illustrates the proactive role of the SMC in addressing irregular attendance caused by children attending a madrasa. The SMC intervened by requesting a change in the madrasa's timing, ensuring that children could attend school punctually. Several schools, such as Abdullapur and Kohli in Bahraich, hold regular parent-teacher meetings owing to active SMC involvement.

In Abdullapur school, ground leveling, repair of approach roads, and boundary construction were undertaken after persistent efforts by the SMC, working closely with block-level functionaries. SMCs have played a crucial role in obtaining UDID cards and certificates for children with disabilities. Notably, some SMCs, like the one at PS Chakjafar, have placed significant emphasis on monitoring the learning processes and tracking progress. They highlighted improvements such as enhanced reading abilities, regular completion of homework, revision at home, cleanliness, and enjoyment in group activities. Both SMCs and head teachers acknowledged that Prajayatna's inputs, including cluster-level training and their presence at SMC meetings, have played a crucial role in enhancing their understanding of roles and responsibilities in education and effectively executing them.

The rating of the SMCs is presented below.

Table 13: SMC Rating

District	Custer	Schools	s1	s2	q1	q2	q3	q4	p1	i1	i2	i3	i4	i5	i6	i7
Chitrakoot	Asoha	PS Chakjafhar	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Chitrakoot	Asoha	Composite school Pachokhr	2	2	3	3	2	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Chitrakoot	Kapseti	PS Rehuta	3	3	3	3	2	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Chitrakoot	Kapseti	PS Katragooder	3	3	3	3	2	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Chitrakoot	Kapseti	PS Bhabhaey	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Chitrakoot	Kapseti	Composite school Chandragahna	3	3	3	3	2	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	2
Bahraich	Bambhaura	PS Alinagar	2	2	3	3	1	2	2	3	3	2	3	1	3	3
Bahraich	Bambhaura	PS Abdulla Pur	3	2	3	3	1	2	1	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Bahraich	Badrauli	PS Badrauli	3	1	3	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	2	3	3
Bahraich	Badrauli	PS Kohli	2	2	3	1	1	2	1	2	3	1	3	2	3	3
Bahraich	Badrauli	PS Chulumbha	2	2	3	3	1	2	2	3	3	2	3	2	3	3

The following rating system was used for each of the dimension and indicators under them:

- Rating of 3 indicates Fully-functional
- Rating of 2 indicates Poorly-functional
- Rating of 1 indicates Non-functional

Table 14: Dimensions of SMC Rating

Dimensions	Indicators	Headings
SMC Formation	Preparation	s1
	Selection process	s2
Quality of meeting	Periodicity of meetings and participation of the members	q1
	Discussion and selection of issues	q2
	Financial income /expenditure information	q3
	Committee participation in other meetings like Gram Sabha	q4
Planning	School Development Plan (SDP)	p1
Implementation and Review - Enrolment and attendance	Enrollment and attendance of children	i1
	Enrollment and attendance of migrant and drop out children	i2
Implementation and Review – Learning	Ensuring the effective performance of teachers	i3
	Monitoring and review of children's learning	i4
Implementation and review - Basic amenities	Availability of basic amenities	i5
Implementation and review - Management	Departmental Scheme / Incentive Program	i6
	Managing Administrative Responsibilities - Public display of information	i7

The table above indicates that the functionality of several School Management Committees was suboptimal, particularly in terms of their formation. In such cases, the Head Teacher, along with a few members, predominantly the President, held the majority of information regarding the formation processes, adhering to rules and regulations.

Regarding the regularity of meetings, all schools maintained a monthly schedule and ensured member attendance. However, when it came to financial decision-making and participation in additional gatherings, such as Gram Sabha meetings, the SMCs faced challenges. Financial decisions were often taken by the Head Teacher in consultation with the President. In terms of planning, the SDP was primarily driven by the head teacher and assistant teachers, with the involvement of the President.

Addressing the effective performance of teachers was not universally achieved by all SMCs. Some struggled to cope with teacher shortages and lacked the capacity to support effective learning in classrooms. In a few instances, SMCs were unable to provide basic facilities as mandated by the Right to Education (RTE) norms.

Parents:

The attitude that parents adopt towards children with disabilities significantly influences the extent to which inclusion and participation in mainstream society can be achieved. Parental perception emerges as a pivotal factor shaping the overall growth and development of a child with a disability. Unfortunately, the social stigma surrounding disabilities experienced by parents often translates to their children, acting as a formidable barrier to their integration.

A notable challenge arises from a lack of awareness regarding available educational facilities and entitlements, hindering parents from providing optimal education for their children with disabilities. The prevailing lack of understanding, both among parents and schools, regarding the resources and accommodations accessible for integrating students with disabilities into regular school environments further compounds the issue.

In essence, overcoming these challenges necessitates a concerted effort to foster awareness, alter perceptions, and ensure that parents are well-informed about the available support systems. This proactive approach is crucial in paving the way for the inclusive education and societal integration of children with disabilities.

Parents who were engaged with the evaluator at baseline, midline, and endline expressed familiarity with Prajayatna's initiatives. A majority had firsthand experience with Prajayatna's efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic, where the organization actively supported education for their children. These parents were cognizant of Prajayatna's contributions to enhancing the quality of education and the diverse activities undertaken to bolster children's learning amid the challenges of the pandemic.

Notably, the parents were well-informed about Prajayatna's commitment to working with children with disabilities. However, the standout factor highlighted by nearly all parents as instrumental in sustaining their children's education over the past two years was the mohalla classes conducted by Prajayatna and the invaluable educational material support provided by the organization. This underscores the critical role played by these localized classes and resources in ensuring ongoing education despite the disruptive circumstances of the pandemic.

Numerous parents of children with disabilities actively participated in these interactions and credited Prajayatna for the dignified existence that CWDs enjoy today. The parent group, comprising both parents of children with and without disabilities, emerged as a vocal advocate for recognizing and addressing the needs, abilities, and challenges

faced by children with disabilities. Members of this diverse group exhibited a comprehensive awareness of CWDs within their respective communities. Parents openly discussed the hurdles their children encountered in day-to-day activities, emphasizing physical challenges, restricted mobility, and communication-related obstacles faced by some CWDs.

A prevailing sentiment among these parents was the belief that all children possess unique abilities, and CWDs, in particular, require the right environment, both at home and at school, to learn effectively and lead productive lives comparable to their peers. They expressed the view that interaction with other children, including those without disabilities, could inspire and positively influence CWDs. The consensus within the group was unwavering — CWDs should be integrated into mainstream schools. Given the right opportunities and support, these parents firmly believed that children with disabilities could succeed in life, mirroring the achievements of their non-disabled counterparts.

According to these parents, it is through Prajayatna's dedicated efforts that children with disabilities have gained acceptance both within the community and in schools. The parents expressed a heightened awareness of the entitlements available to children with disabilities under various policy frameworks such as the Right to Education (RTE), Samagra Shiksha, and others.

Parents spoke passionately about the robust support provided by Prajayatna in facilitating their child's journey toward accessing education and achieving self-reliance. They highlighted diverse entitlements received by their children, including support for enrollment in primary and higher levels of education, certification, AADHAR/UDID cards, escort allowance, stipends, therapy, IERT support, medicines, learning materials, and assistive devices.

Due to the collective interventions by Prajayatna, the School Management Committee, and the community, the school has undergone a transformation into an inclusive and secure space for children with disabilities. Teachers and students alike have developed sensitivity and a supportive attitude toward the unique needs of these children. Notably, there is a distinct absence of discrimination, labeling, ignoring, bullying, or abuse faced by these children. Parents highlighted that teachers invest time in teaching children by Individual Education Plans, fostering an environment where their children have equal opportunities for educational attainment, employment, and a promising future, mirroring the prospects of other children.

Table 15: Processes with SMCs, GP network and Parents

Process	2021		2022		2023	
	No. of meetings	No. of participants	No. of meetings	No. of participants	No. of meetings	No. of participants
SMC meeting	37	475	23	385	64	1415
GP network meeting	7	203	25	735	20	277
Parents meeting	33	449	35	620	19	436

As seen from the above table, several processes have been organized by the Prajayatna team over the years. These include meetings with the School Management Committees (SMCs) at the cluster and school levels, as well as with the Gram Panchayat (GP) network. The GP network meetings comprise the Pradhan, Standing Committee members, SMC, teachers and parents. Separate meetings are also held with parents at the community level.

Goal 4:

Ascertain the extent to which the project objectives have been met and identify factors that have facilitated or impeded the progress towards meeting these objectives

Information has been captured against the results matrix developed by Prajayatna at the beginning of the project.

Table 16: Achievement against the results matrix of the project

Result No. and Activity	Indicators	Target	Cumulative Achievement (Jan 2021 – December 2023)	Remarks
R 01: Teachers from 75 mainstream government schools teachers trained on inclusive education through the inclusive Kalikayatna learning process, using digital tools and content.	75 teachers trained in working with children with and without disabilities in 75 schools in aftermath of covid19	450 (150 each year)	829- These include teachers across 3 years in both locations, IERTs and other department officials	Hybrid model followed initially as there was a delay in operationalizing Teacher Collectives. At that point more focus was on onsite trainings- classroom observations, demos and feedback. Focus largely on achieving foundational literacy and numeracy and other competencies among children, strategies for dealing with CWDs, effective use of inclusive learning materials and TLMs, development of IEPs etc. Teacher Collectives are institutionalized in both locations by now. Foundational Literacy and Numeracy, concept identification and integration addressed through the cluster level collective meetings, once a month. Regular on-site is provided by the Prajayatna team at the project schools.

	IEP is developed for all children with disabilities and is regularly monitored	145 (20, 50, 75)	IEP developed for all 203 children	3 rounds updated for all CWDs. Samples of IEP reviewed at project locations. Involvement of all stakeholders in the planning process. Home visits and interaction with family members was a vital component. Entitlements, rehabilitation plans and accommodations required at the school level were based on IEPs. Plans for the future are also articulated. Monitoring is done mostly at the level of Prajayatna.
	75% of teachers trained and demonstrate inclusive digital literacy skills and school safety (including COVID-19-related practices) in classroom teaching practices with blended learning provisions during emergencies& lockdown.	450 (150 each year)	61 teachers	1 round of training on inclusive learning have done with 61 teachers. Since schools had started functioning, this aspect has been combined with the Teacher Collective and on-site support.
R. 02 Education of children with and without disabilities and out-of-school children	100% enrollment of migrant workers' children, out-of-school children with and without disabilities	215	229	5 days summer camps conducted in 7 locations in both districts on an annual basis where 245 children participated. 12 Mohalla classes were held during the closure of schools at the time of the pandemic where 378 children participated. 203 CWDs and 26 out of school children enrolled through these initiatives. This was also validated through interactions with Panchayat

				members, Shiksha Samitis, head teachers/ teachers.
	A number of children benefitted from referral and rehabilitation services.	260	39 accessed resource centres and other referrals at the district level.	Two resource centres for CWDs established in collaboration with the department in both locations. Resource centers remain functional and are open on specific days of the week, with the IERT being present. Infrastructure and rehabilitation services are utilized by CWDs.
	75 % of children with disabilities access government entitlements	260	203 (460 entitlements)	Prajayatna supported CWDs to access various entitlements such as enrollment in schools, disability certification, AADHAR card, escort allowance, assistive devices based on the type of disability, stipend, opening bank accounts and tablets. Several camps were held for measurement, providing assistive devices and certification.
	1 action research in collaboration with Jagadguru Rambhadra charya Handicappe d University, Chitrakoot on IE, model documentati on and publishing of paper.	1	Evaluation conducted at three different points of time- baseline, midline and endline	Evaluation completed and report submitted to Prajayatna.

	1 national-level seminar on the viability of the learning model and systemic change, conducted	1	2 District level workshop to discuss achievements of the project – Bahraich and Chitrakoot	Being planned as district level workshops in project locations in December 2023
R. 03:Decentralised governance structures implemented in 75 schools for quality inclusive education	75% SMCs are activated in schools and SMCs made functional as per norms, roles and responsibilities	185	211 meetings conducted- 3780 participants	Processes have been held since the reopening of schools. In most locations, SMCs are active and willing to participate in the school development processes. The SMC members were trained about the various roles and responsibilities w.r.t children and education- attendance, bridging learning gaps owing to COVID-19, inclusive learning environment at school, supporting, enrolment, learning and other needs of CWDs, supporting children in their learning at home, regular school visits and interactions with teachers, maintenance and upkeep of school premises, planning for school infrastructure and so on. In the newly formed SMCs (16), a parent of CWD has also been included. Then followed up with school level meetings including PTMs.
	SMC monitoring tools are made digitally inclusive and 75% of school managemen t committees are trained in using ICT.	225	A pilot app was created by Force for Good - an initiative of J.P.Morgan but it could not be scaled further because of some technical issues.	Prajayatana in collaboration with a corporate program had developed a school governance app to track the progress of schools and SMC performance. However, the project could not be deployed due to several technical challenges on the ground.

	GP & District Primary Education Officers, Parents groups are actively involved in the development of schools and address issues related to education, health and hygiene measures of children with and without disabilities, school safety needs.	185	52 GP Network meetings and 1062 participants GP Pres Secretary workshops 4 and 153 participants	Cluster level workshops have been held for Education Standing Committees to orient them about their roles and responsibilities. Further, GP level meetings were held to discuss GP's role in education. Issues related to schools and a*nganwadis* discussed and action plans developed in most cases. GP level network meetings have been conducted (GP Presidents, members, Education standing committee members, SMC members, teachers) to discuss school related issues and information on Balsuraksha Samiti, Childline, POCSO Act etc.

Goal 5: Ascertain the percentage of learners who demonstrate improvement in learning outcomes

The assessment tools were not tailored to be grade-specific; instead, the same test was administered to children across the cohort for both literacy and numeracy evaluations. The assessments were designed in line with literacy and numeracy expectations for Grade 2, considering the recent return of children to schools post-pandemic closures. The assessment involved separate tools for evaluating literacy and numeracy skills. Individual administration of the test was conducted for all children, and the cohort was expected to complete a paper-and-pencil test.

Several foundational literacy skills, including reading comprehension, phonological awareness, decoding, and writing were assessed as part of the assessment. For foundational numeracy, number sense, number operations, measurement, time, money, and data were included.

The baseline assessment took place between November and December 2021, while the endline assessment occurred in November 2023. The tool for different abilities was only administered at the baseline.

The sample for the learning assessment was as follows:

Table 17: Sample for Learning Assessment

				Baseline		**Endline**		**Final Sample**	
District	**Block**	**Cluster**	**School**	Group A (Present)	Group B (Present)	Group A (Present)	Group B (Present)	Group A	Group B
			Chakjafhar	16	21	23	26	13	19
	Pahadi	Asoha	Pachokhr	2	17	7	21	2	12
			Rehuta	17	19	20	26	15	18
			Katragooder	10	17	12	14	9	13
			Bhabhaey	15	19	2	15	1	11
Chitrakoot	Karwi	Kapseti	Chandragahna	0	11	9	6	0	7
			Alinagar	19	20	28	31	19	17
Bahraich	Jarwal	Bambhaura	Abdulla Pur	11	13	20	22	11	11

			Badrauli	22	29	38	53	20	28
			Kohli	18	20	21	29	16	16
	Kaiserganj	Badrauli	Chulumbha	15	34	23	42	13	31
	Total			145	220	203	285	119	183
	Total			**365**		**488**		**302**	

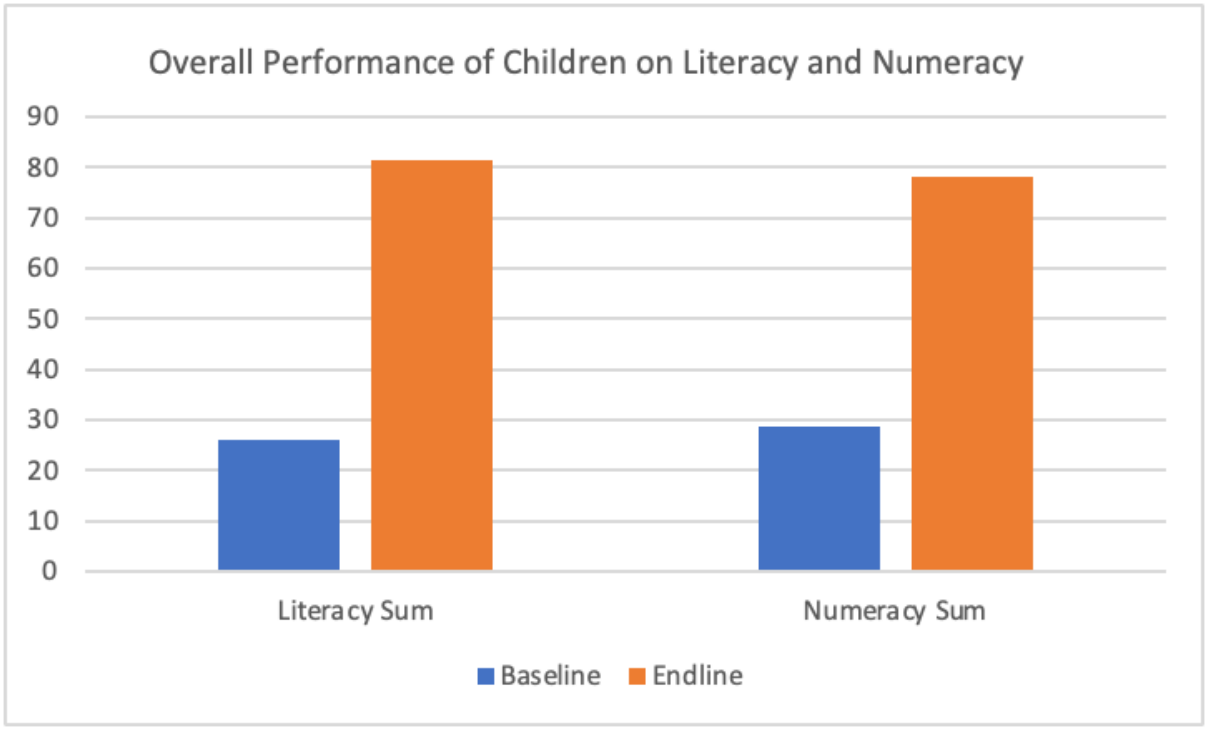
The results are presented under three heads, Literacy, Numeracy and Different Abilities of Students.

Literacy and Numeracy:

The results are presented below:

Overall Performance of Children on Literacy and Numeracy:

Figure 7: Overall Performance of Children on Literacy and Numeracy

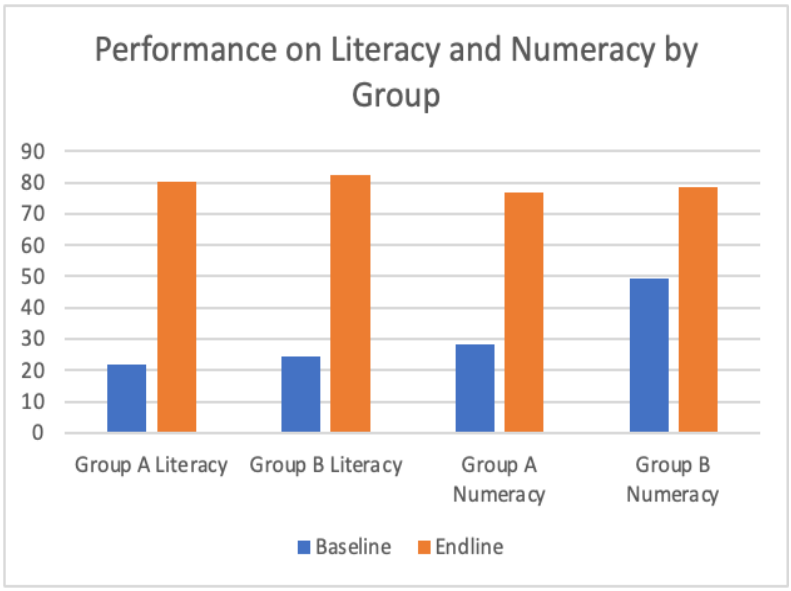


Children were tasked with completing a total of 33 literacy tasks and 19 numeracy tasks. The overall score was calculated based on the accurate completion of these questions. At baseline, the proportion of children who could correctly answer the literacy questions was 25.86%, and for numeracy, it was 28.51%. This proportion increased to 81.54% for literacy and 78% for numeracy at endline.

It is noticeable that the overall numeracy score was slightly higher than the literacy score at baseline. However, the improvement in literacy at endline was more significant.

Performance on Literacy and Numeracy by Group:

Figure 8: Performance on Literacy and Numeracy by Group

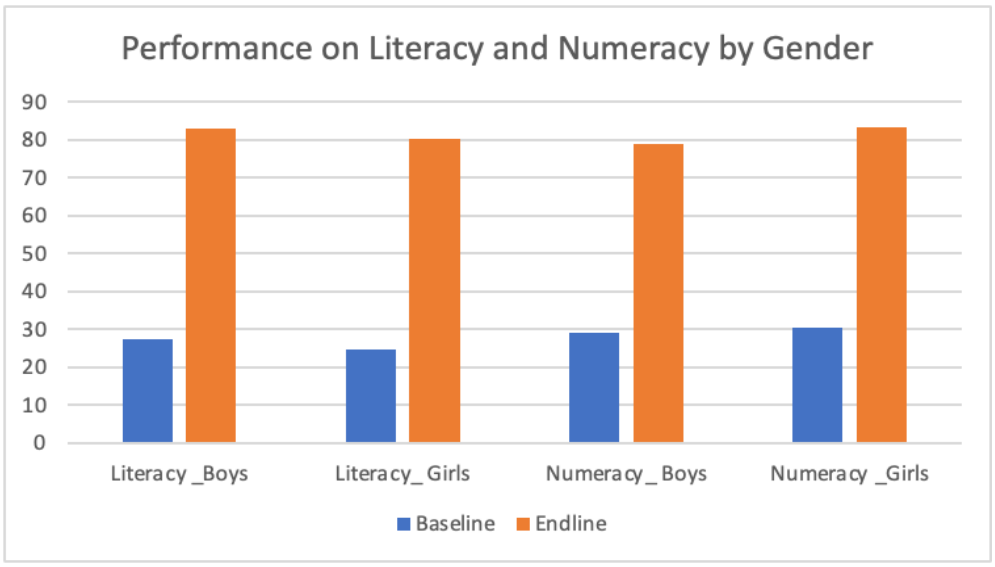


The test was administered to two groups, A and B, during the baseline assessment when Group A was in Grade 2 and Group B in Grade 3. At the endline, these children had progressed to Grades 4 and 5, respectively. The chart above illustrates the performance of these groups at both baseline and endline.

For Group A, the literacy score increased from 22.05% at baseline to 80.09% at endline, while the numeracy score rose from 28.34% to 76.80%. Likewise, for Group B, the literacy score improved from 24.05% to 82.47%, and the numeracy score increased from 49.23% to 78.77%. All groups achieved scores above 78% at the endline, with the most significant improvement observed in Group B for literacy. The least change was noted in Group B for numeracy, which started at 49.23% at baseline and progressed to 78.77% at endline.

Performance on Literacy and Numeracy by Gender:

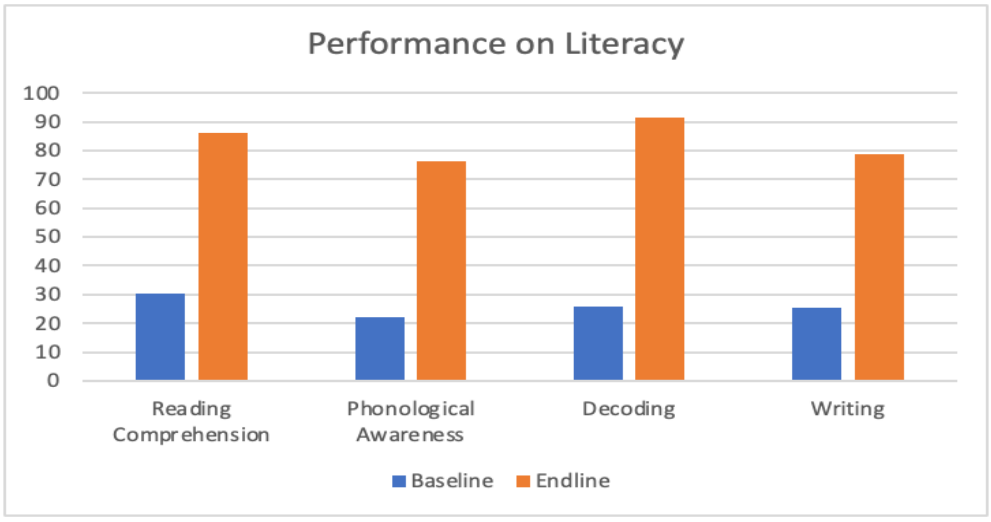
Figure 9: Performance on Literacy and Numeracy by Gender



As observed, there were no significant differences between the performance of boys and girls in literacy at both baseline and endline. However, for numeracy, girls demonstrated slightly better performance at baseline, and this trend persisted even at endline.

Performance on Literacy:

Figure 10: Performance on Literacy

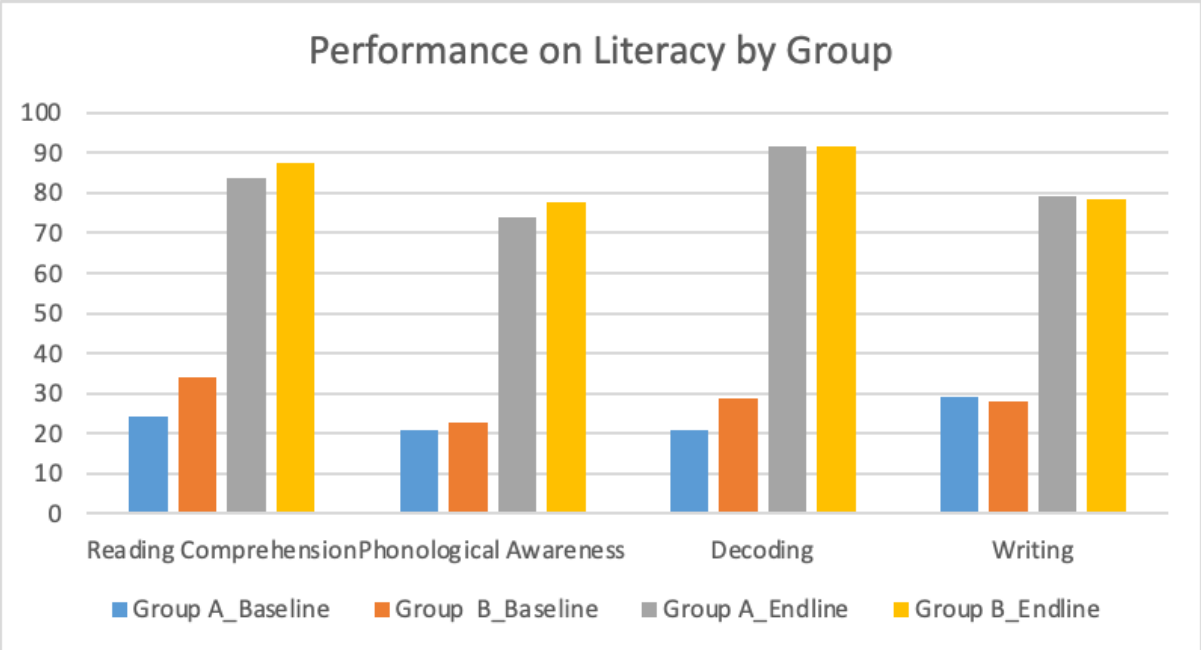


The most notable change occurred in decoding, with the percentage increasing significantly from 25.71 at baseline to 91.5. In contrast, the performance change for other dimensions of reading, such as comprehension, phonological awareness, and

writing, showed a relatively consistent pattern. This suggests that most children did not experience any difficulty in decoding, however there was a small segment that had not mastered the deciphering of written words based on understanding the relationship between *aksharas* and sound. On the other dimensions of literacy, reading comprehension, phonological awareness, and writing, the children demonstrated a comparable and steady enhancement in performance. In reading comprehension from a moderate initial assessment at 30.19%, the cohort made a significant increase at endline (86.09%). This progression indicates enhanced skills in understanding and interpreting the written text. Similarly, in terms of phonological awareness, the cohort exhibited a score of 21.94% at baseline, which significantly improved to 76.24% at endline. This progress indicates enhanced proficiency in recognizing and manipulating the sounds of the spoken language, particularly in the aspects of *maatra* awareness and rhyme awareness. For writing, the initial baseline score of 25.37% experienced substantial improvement, reaching 78.84% at the endline. This progress signifies significant development in the cohort's writing skills over the course of the project.This overall progress indicates a well-rounded advancement in various literacy dimensions among the assessed children.

Performance on Literacy by Group:

Figure 11: Performance on Literacy by Group



The data reveals substantial improvements in literacy dimensions from baseline to endline for both Group A and Group B.

Reading Comprehension:

- Group A: The percentage increased significantly from 24.44 at baseline to 83.66 at endline.
- Group B: Similarly, there was a substantial improvement from 33.92 at baseline to 87.64 at endline.

Both groups demonstrated noteworthy progress in the competencies of understanding texts and retrieving information from them, as well as interpreting texts. This largely included identification, naming and understanding of concepts based on text.

Phonological Awareness:

- Group A: Showed a significant increase from 20.7 at baseline to 74.03 at endline.
- Group B: Also experienced improvement, going from 22.75 at baseline to 77.66 at endline.

Both groups displayed enhanced awareness of competencies such as word awareness, rhyme awareness, and awareness of sounds within words which should emerge from their meaningful engagement with language.

Decoding:

- Group A: Witnessed a remarkable improvement from 21 at baseline to 91.52 at endline.
- Group B: Similarly, experienced a substantial increase from 28.77 at baseline to 91.48 at endline.

Both groups exhibited a significant advancement in akshara knowledge and decoding.

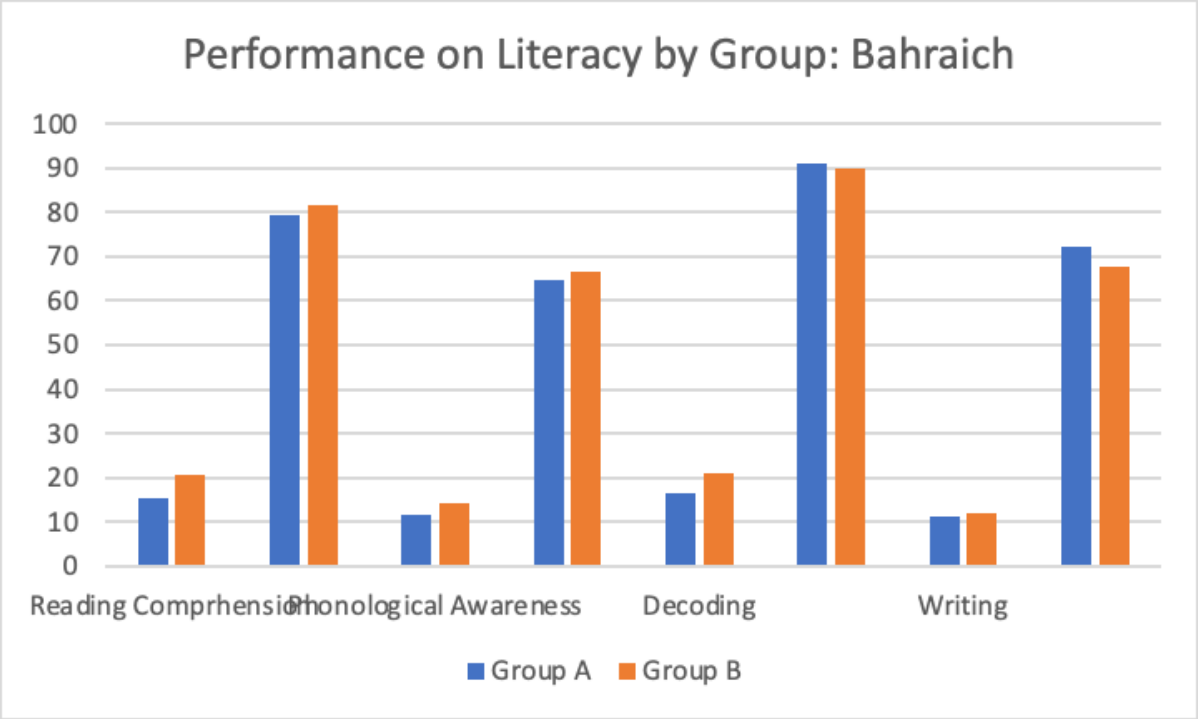
Writing:

- Group A: Showed progress from 29 at baseline to 79.23 at endline.
- Group B: Demonstrated improvement from 28.21 at baseline to 78.6 at endline.

Both groups displayed enhanced writing skills, of writing *aksharas*, word as well as short answers as writing for expression.

Performance on Literacy by Group: Bahraich

Figure 12: Performance on Literacy by Group: Bahraich



The data for Bahraich region reflects significant improvements in various literacy dimensions from baseline to endline for both Group A and Group B.

Reading Comprehension:

- Group A: The substantial increase from 15.3% at baseline to 79.45% at endline indicates significant progress in understanding and interpreting written content.
- Group B: Similarly, the rise from 20.82% to 81.81% in Group B showcases notable advancements in reading comprehension.

Phonological Awareness:

- Group A: The improvement from 11.62% to 64.69% at endline suggests significant growth in phonological awareness.
- Group B: With an increase from 14.12% to 66.75%, this group too exhibited improved phonological awareness.

Decoding:

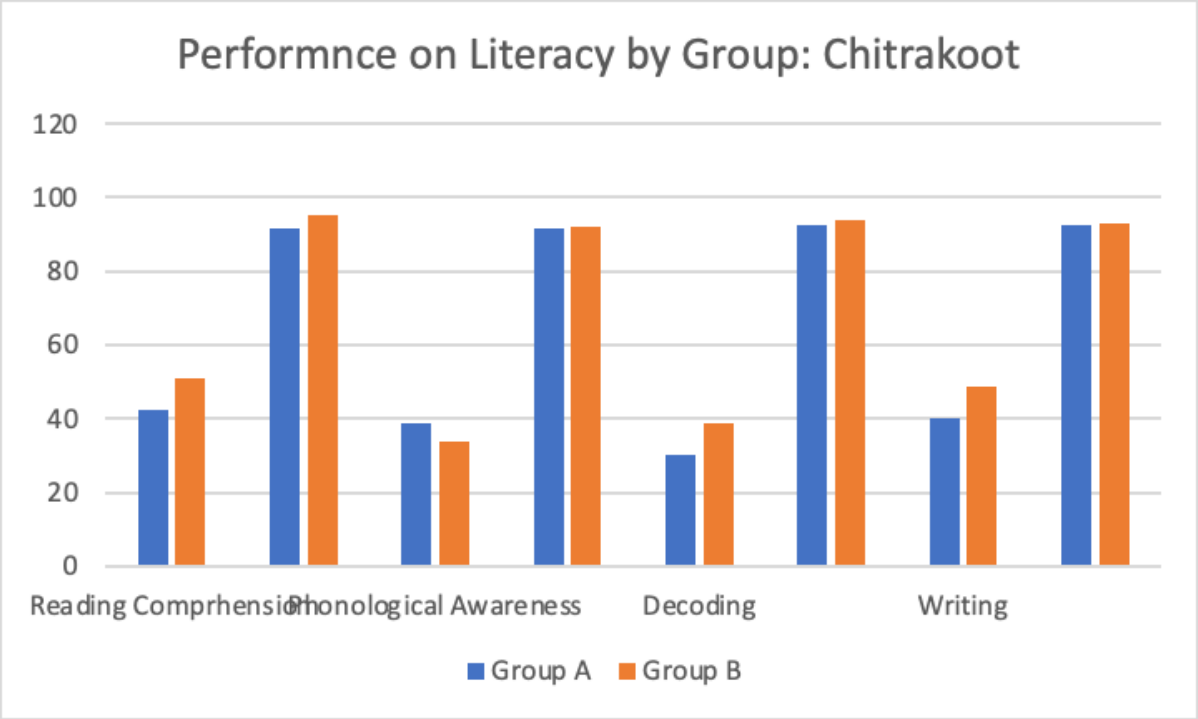
- Group A: The substantial jump from 16.45% at baseline to 90.9% at endline indicates a significant enhancement in the ability to break down and understand written words.
- Group B: Similarly, there is an increase from 21.03% to 89.84% for Group B.

Writing:

- Group A: Progressing from 11.39% to 72.24% at endline indicates improved writing skills, reflecting enhanced expression and communication abilities.
- Group B: With an improvement from 12.13% to 67.73%, both groups demonstrated enhanced writing capabilities.

Performance on Literacy by Group: Chitrakoot

Figure 13: Performance on Literacy by Group: Chitrakoot



The graph reflects significant advancements in various literacy dimensions from baseline to endline for both Group A and Group B in Chitrakoot.

Reading Comprehension:

- Group A: The improvement from 42.5% at baseline to 91.57% at endline demonstrates a significant enhancement in understanding and interpreting written content.
- Group B: Similarly, the rise from 50.79% to 95.39% suggests notable progress in reading comprehension skills.

Phonological Awareness:

- Group A: The increase from 38.63% to 91.57% at the endline signifies significant progress in recognizing and understanding the sounds and structures of words.
- Group B: With an improvement from 33.86% to 92.17%, both groups displayed enhanced phonological awareness, a critical aspect of early literacy.

Decoding:

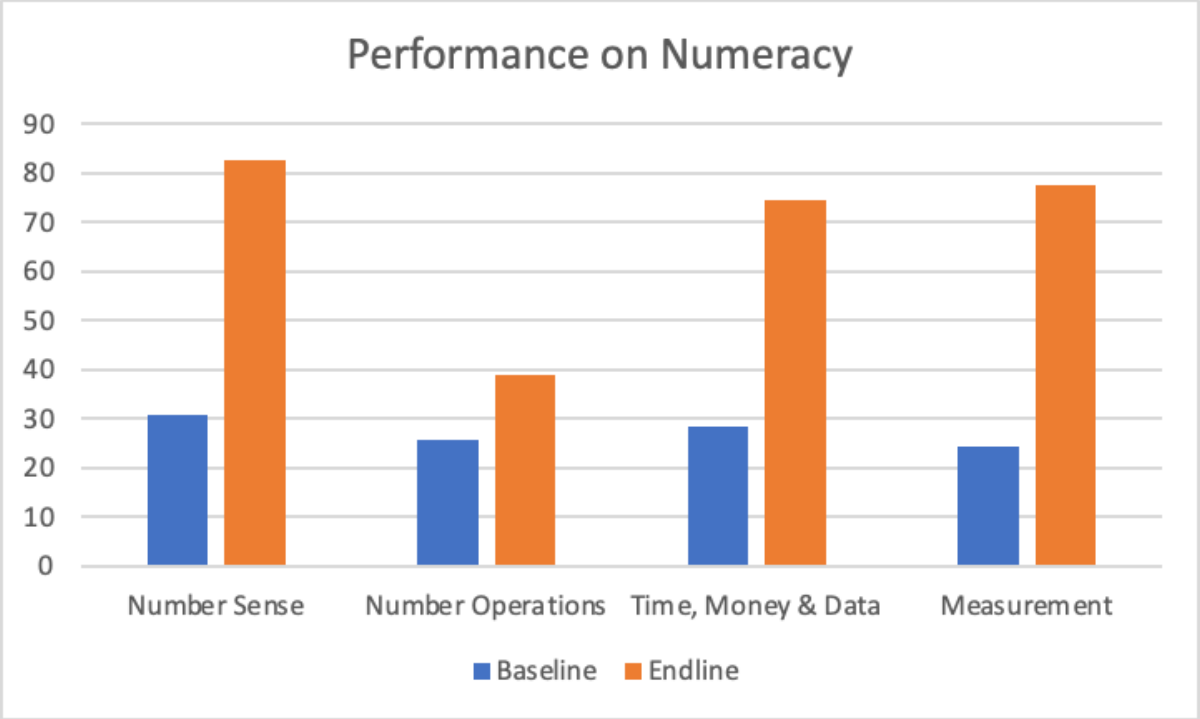
- Group A: The substantial jump from 30% at baseline to 92.68% at endline indicates a significant improvement in the ability to break down and understand written words.
- Group B: Similarly, the increase from 38.75% to 93.67% suggests significant progress in decoding skills.

Writing:

- Group A: Progressing from 40% to 92.37% at endline indicates improved writing skills, reflecting better expression and communication abilities.
- Group B: With an improvement from 48.9% to 93.03%, both groups demonstrated enhanced writing capabilities, emphasizing comprehensive development in literacy.

Performance on Numeracy:

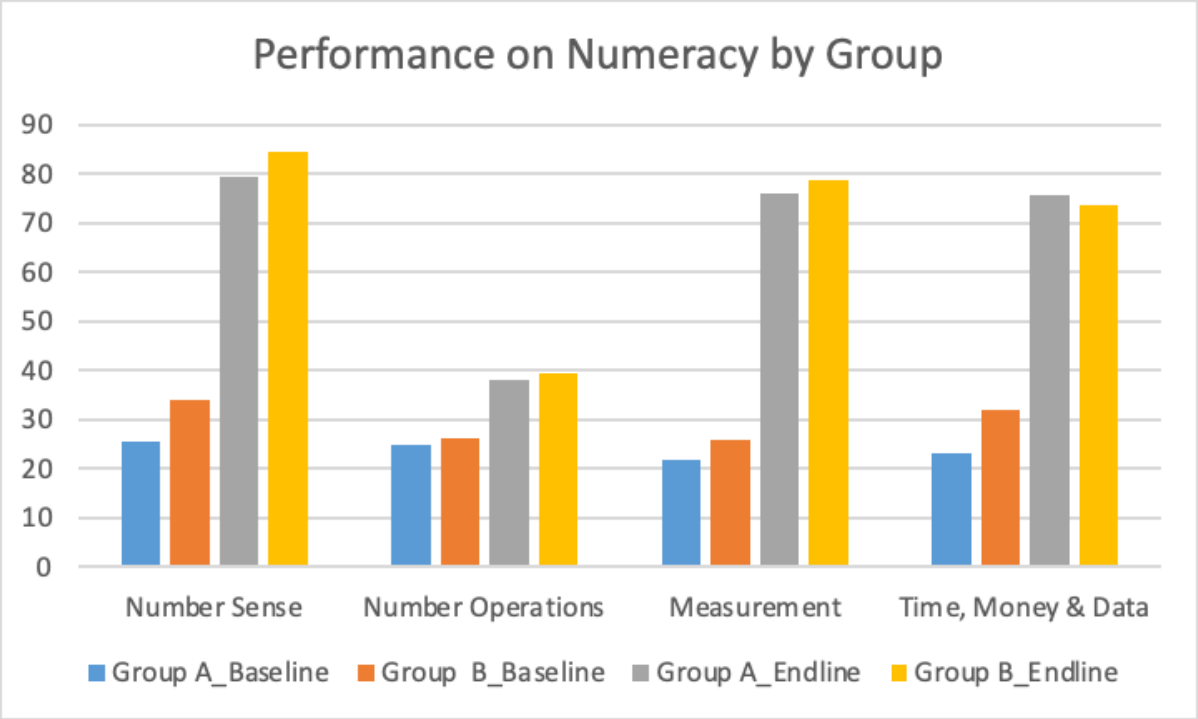
Figure 14: Performance on Numeracy



The most notable improvement in performance can be seen in the dimension of number sense, where competencies such as number identification, skip counting, ordering of objects and understanding of place values were assessed. from a moderate level of understanding and proficiency in number sense (30.68%), the cohort achieved a substantial increase by endline (82.48%) . However, it is worrisome to note the change in performance in number operations, which measured competencies related to addition and subtraction of two digits. The initial assessment indicates 25.66% in executing arithmetic operations. At the endline, while there is an improvement, the percentage (38.82%) suggests progress, albeit with room for further improvement. There has been significant improvement in performance on measurement and time, money and data. From a baseline achievement of 28.55%, the cohort moved to 74.5%, signifying effective learning and application of concepts related to time, money, and data. In the area of measurement, from a baseline performance of 24.33%, there was a significant improvement, with the cohort scoring 77.64% at the endline, indicating an understanding of measurement concepts.

Performance on Numeracy by Group:

Figure 15: Performance on Numeracy by Group

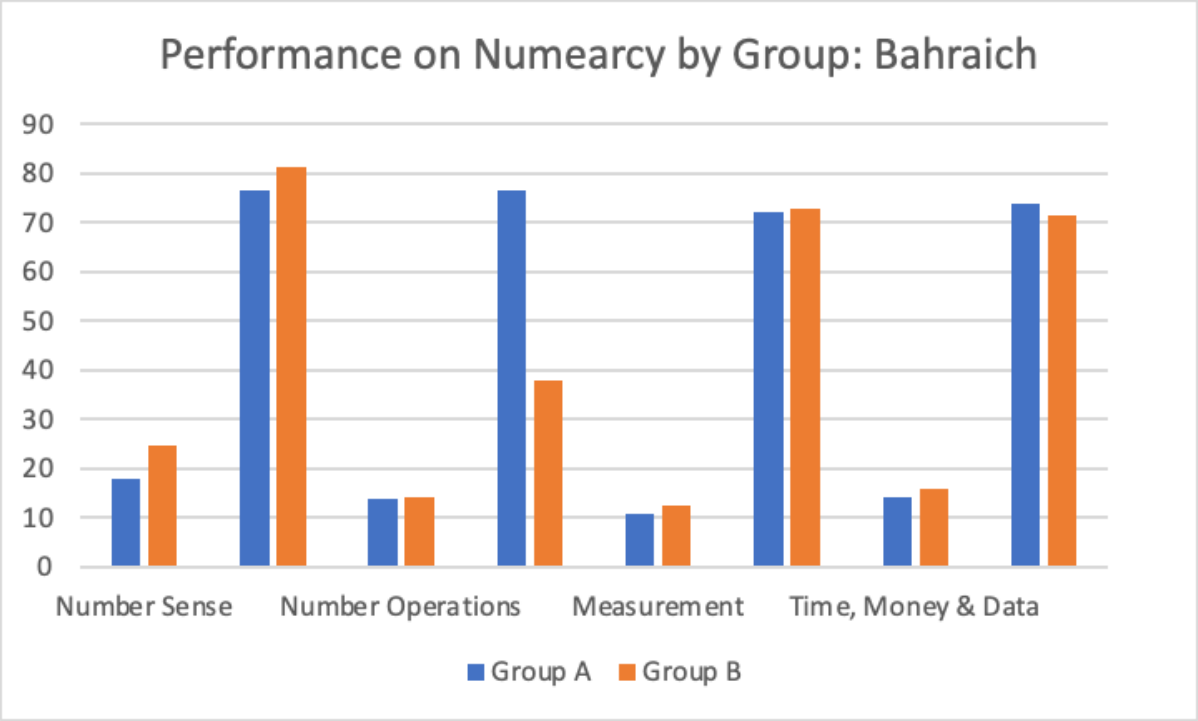


The bar provides insights into the baseline and endline performance of both Group A and Group B in key mathematical areas, namely Number Sense, Number Operations, Measurement, and Time, Money and Data.

- Number Sense: Both Group A and Group B showed notable improvement from baseline to endline. Group A increased from 25.58% to 79.37%, and Group B increased from 34% to 84.48%. This suggests a substantial enhancement in the participants' understanding and manipulation of numbers.
- Number Operations: Both groups demonstrated marginal improvement in Number Operations. Group A increased from 24.78% to 37.92%, and Group B increased from 26.22% to 39.4%. Leveraging this finding can guide the development of more effective strategies for teaching number operations in classrooms. Identifying specific areas where students face challenges and tailoring instructional methods accordingly can contribute to improved learning outcomes in mathematics.
- Measurement: There was significant progress in Measurement skills for both groups. Group A increased from 21.8% to 75.84%, and Group B increased from 25.95% to 78.8%. This suggests improvement in understanding and applying measurement concepts.
- Time, Money & Data: Both groups exhibited growth in skills related to Time, Money & Data. Group A increased from 23.1% to 75.63%, and Group B increased from 32.1% to 73.77%. This indicates advancements in understanding and dealing with concepts related to time, money, and data.

Performance by Group: Bahraich:

Figure 16: Performance by Group: Bahraich



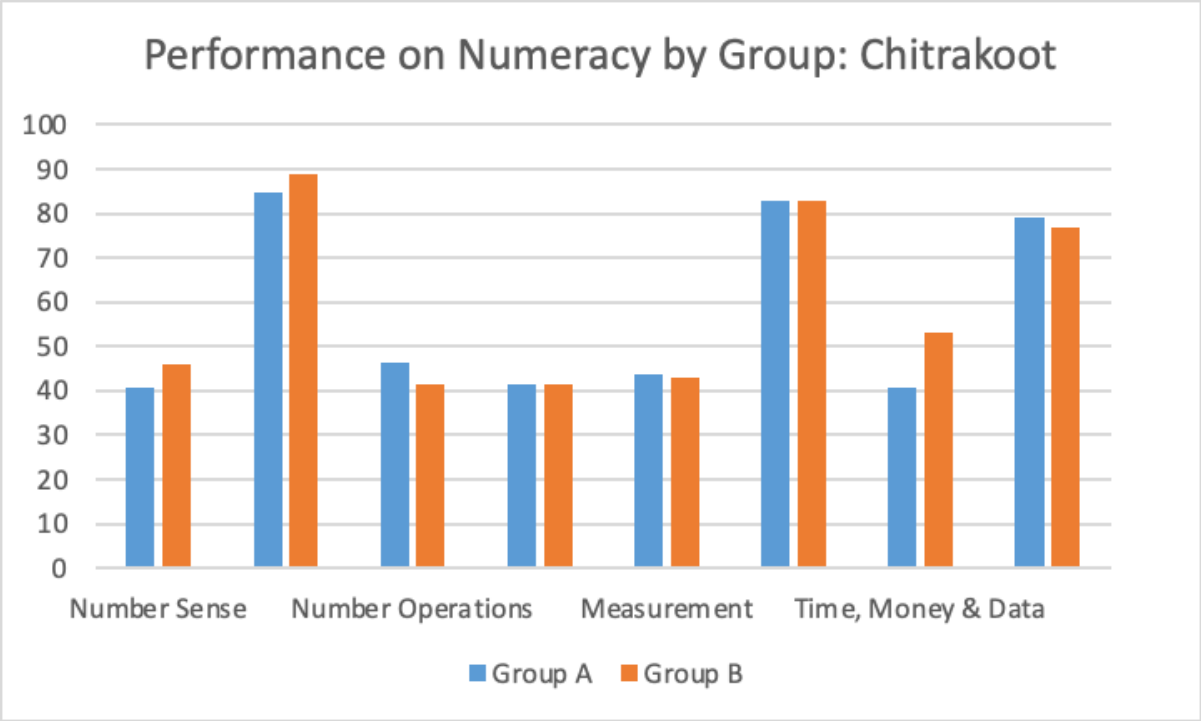
Based on the bar above, the following interpretations can be made.

- Number Sense: Both Group A and Group B in Bahraich displayed substantial improvement i. Group A increased from 18% to 76.47%, and Group B increased from 24.59% to 81.26%. This indicates progress in understanding numerical concepts.
- Number Operations: Group A showed a notable increase in Number Operations, rising from 13.92% to 76.47%. However, Group B exhibited only a marginal increase from 14.32% to 37.85%. This suggests a mixed trend in arithmetic operations understanding.
- Measurement: Both groups in Bahraich demonstrated improvement in Measurement. Group A increased from 10.75% to 72.07%, and Group B increased from 12.62% to 72.71%. This signifies progress in understanding the attributes of objects and events in the context of size, length, volume, and area.
- Time, Money & Data: Both groups exhibited improvement in understanding Time, Money, and Data. Group A increased from 14.24% to 73.7%, while Group B increased from 15.77% to 71.42%. This indicates progress in comprehending concepts related to time, money, and data interpretation.

The results suggest an overall positive trend in numerical and measurement skills among children in Bahraich, with some variations in specific areas that may require targeted interventions.

Performance on Numeracy by Group: Chitrakoot:

Figure 17: Performance on Numeracy by Group: Chitrakoot



The graph reflects the performance of children from both groups in Chitrakoot.

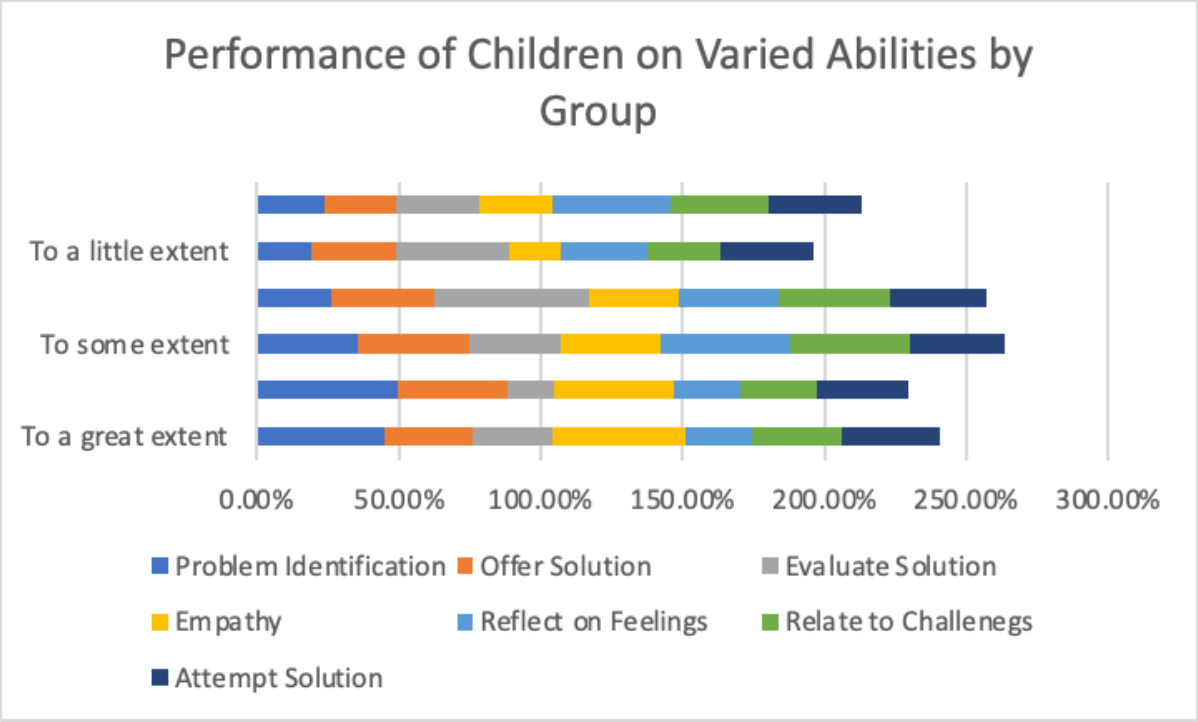
- Number Sense: Both Group A and Group B in Chitrakoot exhibited significant improvement in Number Sense. Group A increased from 40.55% to 84.82%, and Group B increased from 46.11% to 88.74%. This indicates substantial progress in understanding numerical concepts.
- Number Operations: Group A showed a minor decrease in Number Operations, from 46.25% to 41.46%. However, Group B's remained at the same level, at 41.56% and 41.45% at baseline and endline respectively. These variations suggest that children have difficulties in arithmetic operations understanding.
- Measurement: Both groups in Chitrakoot demonstrated improvement in Measurement. Group A increased from 43.75% to 82.92%, and Group B increased from 43.12% to 82.91%. This signifies progress in understanding of measurement
- Time, Money & Data: Group A exhibited a decrease in understanding Time, Money, and Data, from 40.62% to 79.26%. Meanwhile, Group B displayed an increase from 53.12% to 76.89%. These variations suggest divergent trends in comprehending concepts related to time, money , and data interpretation.

Overall, the results indicate positive advancements in numerical and measurement skills among children in Chitrakoot, with some variations in specific areas that may require focused attention.

Different Abilities of Students:

A separate tool was used to assess children's abilities across attitudinal domains. This task focused on problem-solving, including problem identification, evaluation, recognition of feelings, empathy, and finding solutions. The table below illustrates the performance of children in these areas during a group exercise conducted in classrooms. It's important to note that this tool was administered independently for Group A and B, and only at one point in time. It is to be noted that this cohort is missing some children from the cohort that was administered the learning assessments.

Figure 18: Performance of Children on Varied Abilities by Group



In summary, both Group A and Group B demonstrated varying degrees of problem-solving abilities across different parameters, with some differences in the extent of their responses.

- Problem Identification:
    - Group A: Identified problems to a great extent (45.24%), followed by to some extent (35.71%), and to a little extent (19.05%).
    - Group B: Also identified problems to a great extent (49.40%), followed by to some extent (26.51%), and to a little extent (24.10%).
- Offer Solution:
    - Group A: Offered solutions to a great extent (30.95%), followed by to a little extent (30.16%), and to some extent (38.89%).
    - Group B: Offered solutions to some extent (36.14%), followed by to a little extent (24.70%), and to a great extent (39.16%).
- Evaluate Solution:
    - Group A: Evaluated solutions mostly to a little extent (39.68%), followed by to some extent (32.54%), and to a great extent (27.78%).
    - Group B: Evaluated solutions mostly to some extent (54.22%), followed by to a little extent (29.52%), and to a great extent (16.27%).
- Empathy:
    - Group A: Showed empathy to a great extent (46.83%), followed by to some extent (34.92%), and to a little extent (18.25%).
    - Group B: Showed empathy to a great extent (42.17%), followed by to some extent (31.93%), and to a little extent (25.90%).
- Reflect on Feelings:
    - Group A: Reflected on feelings mostly to a little extent (41.57%), followed by to some extent (46.03%), and to a great extent (23.81%).
    - Group B: Reflected on feelings mostly to some extent (34.94%), followed by to a little extent (30.16%), and to a great extent (23.49%).
- Relate to Challenges:
    - Group A: Related to challenges mostly to some extent (42.06%), followed by to a little extent (26.19%), and to a great extent (31.75%).
    - Group B: Related to challenges mostly to some extent (39.16%), followed by to a little extent (34.34%), and to a great extent (26.51%).
- Attempt Solution:
    - Group A: Attempted solutions mostly to a little extent (33.13%), followed by to some extent (33.33%), and to a great extent (34.13%).
    - Group B: Attempted solutions mostly to some extent (34.34%), followed by to a little extent (32.54%), and to a great extent (32.53%)

Progress of Children with Disabilities:

Prajayatna monitors students' progress in multiple domains annually. A progress card is compiled using data gathered from teacher observations. Two distinct tools are employed to evaluate children with disabilities. The initial tool assesses all children with disabilities, and those displaying notable progress undergo further evaluation using the second tool.

The tool tested children on dimensions such as ability to perform self-help tasks, social-emotional tasks, motor skills, cognitive and perceptual skills, language and communication skills. Analysis has been carried out separately for both districts.

Table 18: Dimensions of Learning for CWDs-1

Legend	Area	Indicators
A1	Ability to perform self-help tasks	Can eat by self-can hold, bite and chew dry food items
A2	Ability to perform self-help tasks	Can drink water- can sip from glass/straw
A3	Ability to perform self-help tasks	Indicates toilet
A4	Ability to perform self-help tasks	Uses toilet
A5	Ability to perform self-help tasks	Bathing by self
A6	Ability to perform self-help tasks	Can brush teeth
A7	Ability to perform self-help tasks	Can comb hair
A8	Ability to perform self-help tasks	Can wear clothes
S1	Social emotional skills	Engages with family
S2	Social emotional skills	Engages with peers
S3	Social emotional skills	Emotional regulation
M1	Motor skills	Mobility, balance and coordination
M2	Motor skills	Manipulative skills- grasping small objects, transferring hand to hand, tripod grasp
C1	Cognitive and perceptual skills	Identifies new stimulus in environment
C2	Cognitive and perceptual skills	Object permanence
C3	Cognitive and perceptual skills	Thinking and problem solving
C4	Cognitive and perceptual skills	Choice making
L1	Language & Communication skills	Speech
L2	Language & Communication skills	Expresses needs & emotions
L3	Language & Communication skills	Comprehends simple language

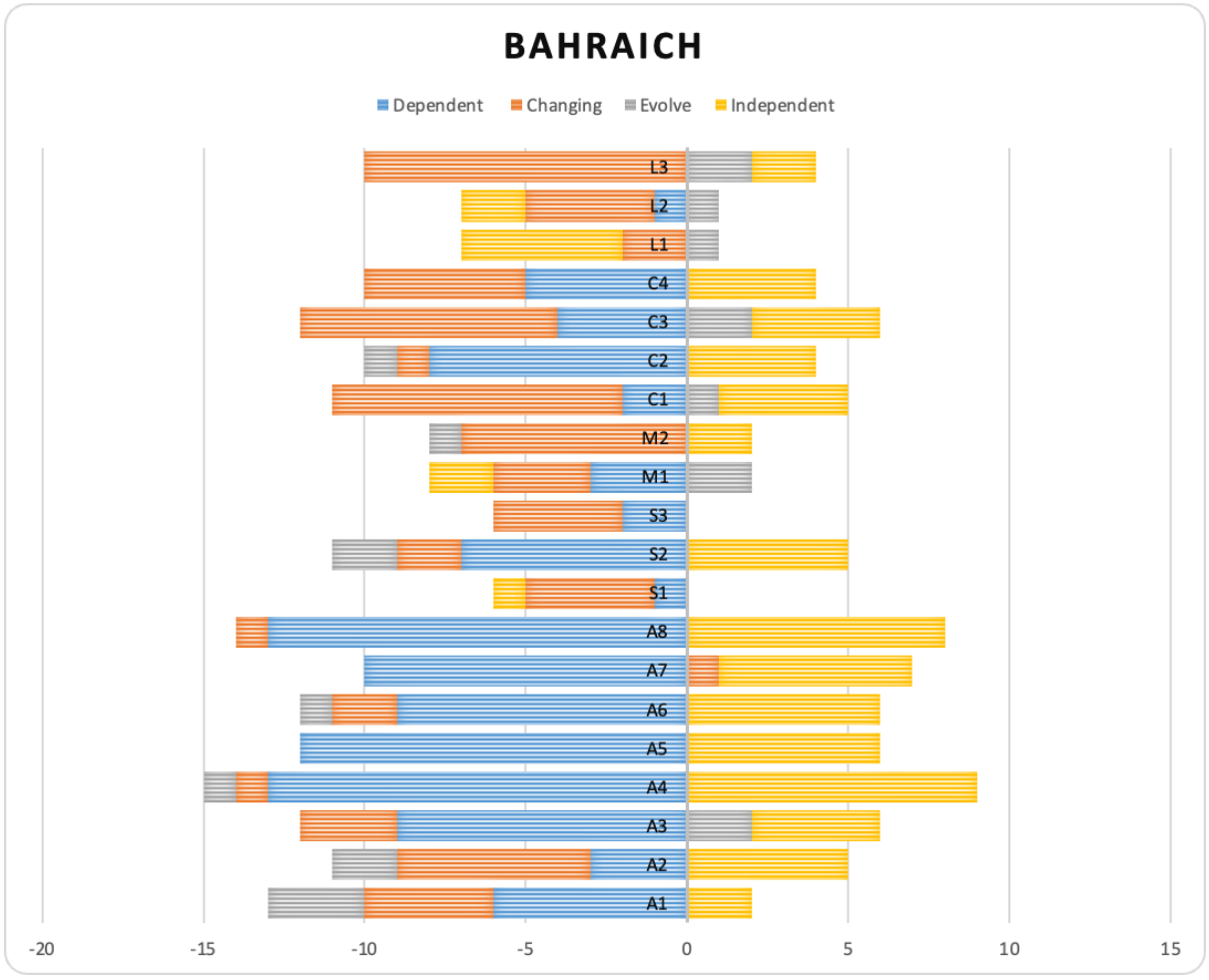
The second tool captures children's progress in the dimensions of various tasks, identifying, naming and understanding different concepts, arithmetic, communication, reading and writing.

Table 19: Dimensions of Learning for CWDs-2

Legend	Area	Indicators
A1	Ability to perform various tasks	Ability to perform tasks independently (eating, tidying, packing, wearing footwear, going to the toilet)
A2	Ability to perform various tasks	Ability to work in a Group
A3	Ability to perform various tasks	Ability to use material and tools (Colouring, tearing paper, cutting, etc
A4	Ability to perform various tasks	Ability to show self-control
A5	Ability to perform various tasks	Ability to identify and understand emotions
B1	Identifying, Naming and Understanding Different Concepts	Colours
B2	Identifying, Naming and Understanding Different Concepts	Parts of the body
B3	Identifying, Naming and Understanding Different Concepts	Flora - Vegetables and fruits, plants, flowers
B4	Identifying, Naming and Understanding Different Concepts	Fauna -Animals and birds
B5	Identifying, Naming and Understanding Different Concepts	Shapes
B6	Identifying, Naming and Understanding Different Concepts	Other Concepts (Vehicles, Professions, etc)
C1	Arithmetic	Matching and Classification
C2	Arithmetic	Identification of sizes and comparison
C3	Arithmetic	Seriation and patterning
C4	Arithmetic	identify and use numbers
C5	Arithmetic	Addition
C6	Arithmetic	Subtraction
D1	Communication	Listening, follow
D2	Communication	Speaking
E1	Reading	medium of instruction
E2	Reading	– English
F1	Writing	medium of instruction
F2	Writing	– English

Performance of CWDs in Bahraich:

Figure 19: Performance of CWDs on tool 1 in Bahraich



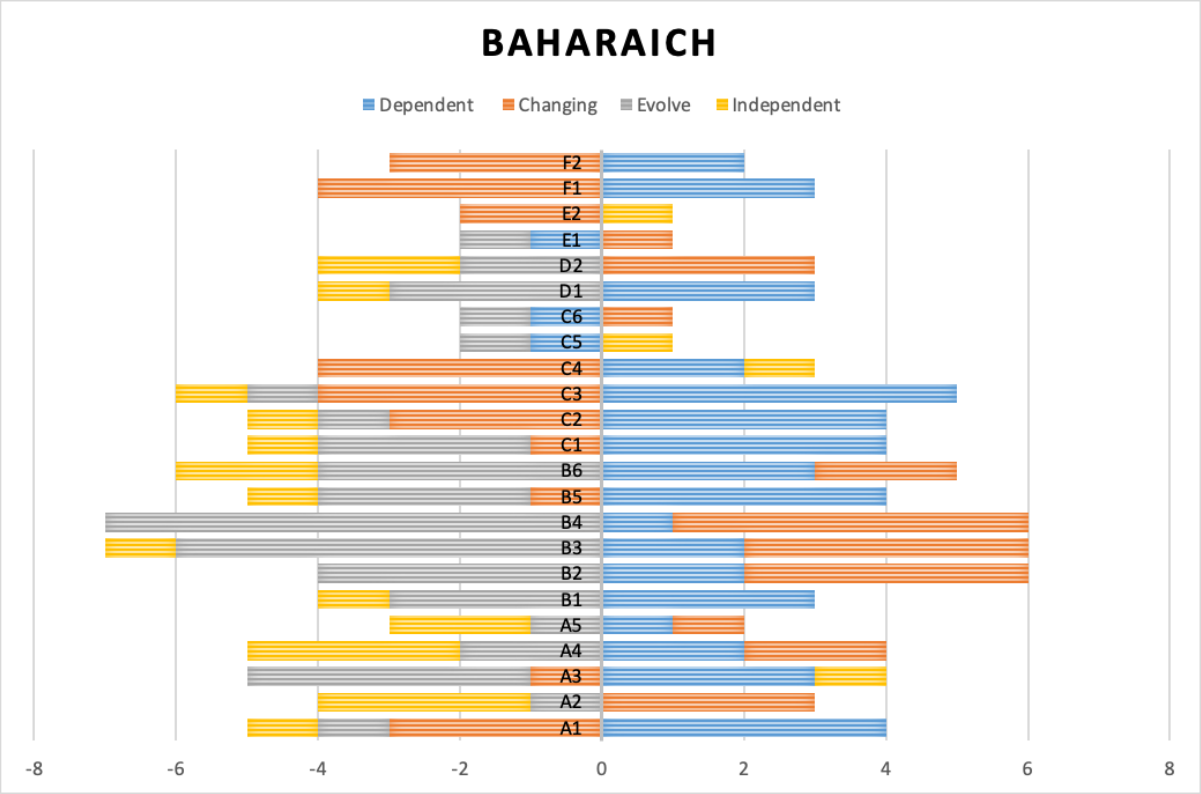
In Bahraich, the progress of 33 children with disabilities was assessed. Here, most children had intellectual disabilities (10), followed by cerebral palsy (8), hearing impairment (4), visual impairment (3), and multiple disabilities (2). Of those assessed at endline, the number had reduced to 27, as three children had passed away, two children had completed 8th grade and were outside the purview of the project, and one child had migrated to another town.

Children in Bahraich displayed remarkable progress in self-help skills, as those in the 'independent' category increased, while those in 'dependent' and other categories fell. For socio-emotional skills, there was an increase in the 'independent' category for S2 (engagement with peers), and in the other two parameters, there was a decrease in 'dependent' and 'changing' categories. However, in the case of the 'independent' category as well, one could see a dip. For motor skills, M1 and M2 saw an increase in 'evolving' and 'independent' categories, respectively. Again, for cognitive and perceptual skills, there was a definite increase in the 'independent' category as well as

the 'evolving' category for a couple of parameters. For language and communication skills, those in the 'evolving' category increased, but ironically, those in the 'independent' category dropped for at least two parameters (speech, expressing emotions and needs).

Of the 27, 12 were assessed using the second tool. Their performance on various tasks is presented below.

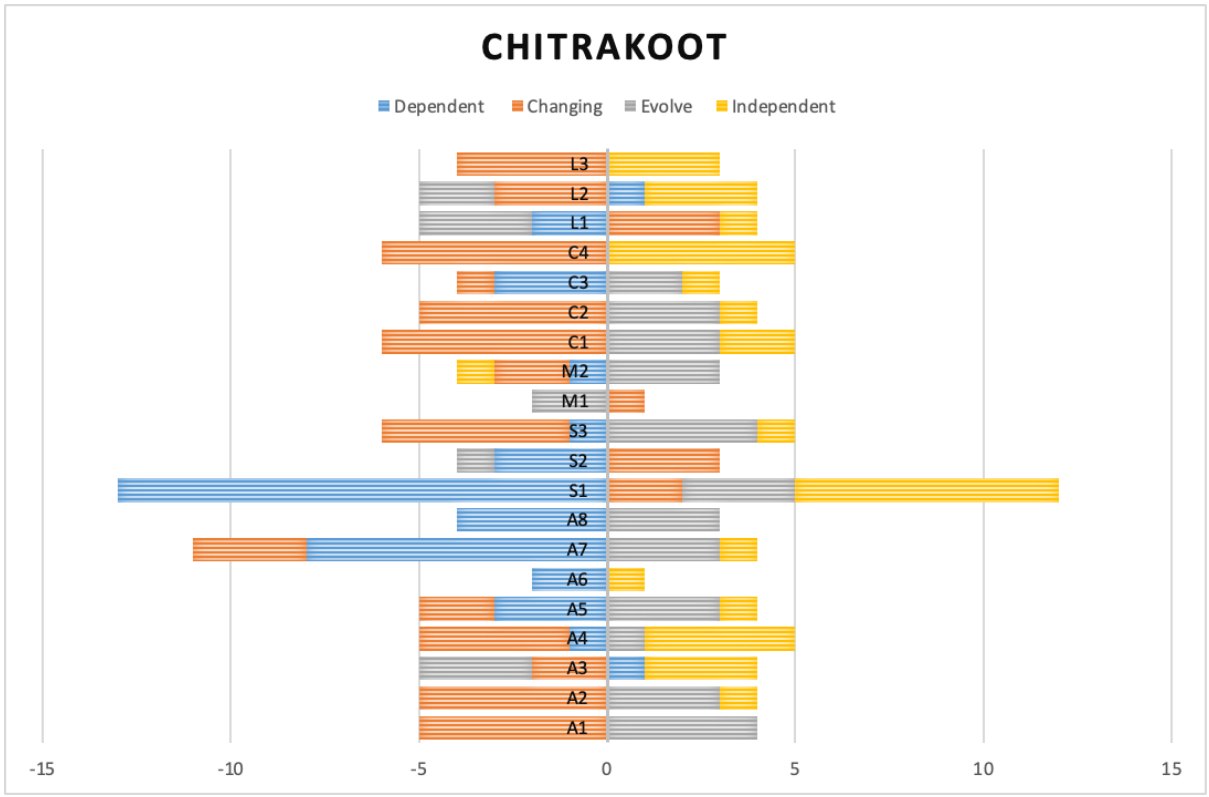
Figure 20: Performance of CWDs on tool 2 in Bahraich



The graph indicates concerning trends in the domain of task performance, with a decrease in categories such as 'independent,' 'evolving,' and 'changing,' and an increase in the 'dependent' category. In the domain of identification, naming, and understanding different concepts, there is a notable drop in the 'evolving' category, accompanied by an increase in the 'dependent' and 'changing' categories. Similarly, for arithmetic, there is a decline in 'changing,' 'evolving,' and 'independent' categories, with an uptick in the 'dependent' category. In communication, a decrease is observed in both 'evolving' and 'independent' categories. While reading shows an increase in 'changing' or 'independent' categories, writing sees a rise in the 'dependent' category. Further investigation is needed to understand the factors contributing to the decline in performance within this group.

Performance of CWDs in Chitrakoot:

Figure 21: Performance of CWDs on tool 1 in Chitrakoot



The progress of 22 children was assessed both at baseline and endline, reflecting their developmental journey across domains. In Chitrakoot, most children with disabilities had multiple disabilities, followed by intellectual disabilities (4), orthopedically handicapped (3), visual impairment (1), and hearing impairment (1). The categories on the left side of 0 indicate a decrease in a particular category at the endline, while those on the right side indicate an increase in that specific category.

Notable trends include an increase in the 'evolving' and 'independent' categories for self-help tasks, showcasing significant positive changes. However, these trends are not consistent across all parameters. For the dimension of self-help related to A3 (indicating toilet), there was a decrease in 'evolving' and an increase in 'independent' categories. In tasks A5 to A8 (bathing by self, brushing, combing hair, wearing clothes), there was a decrease in children falling into the 'dependent' category, indicating positive progress toward higher levels of self-reliance.

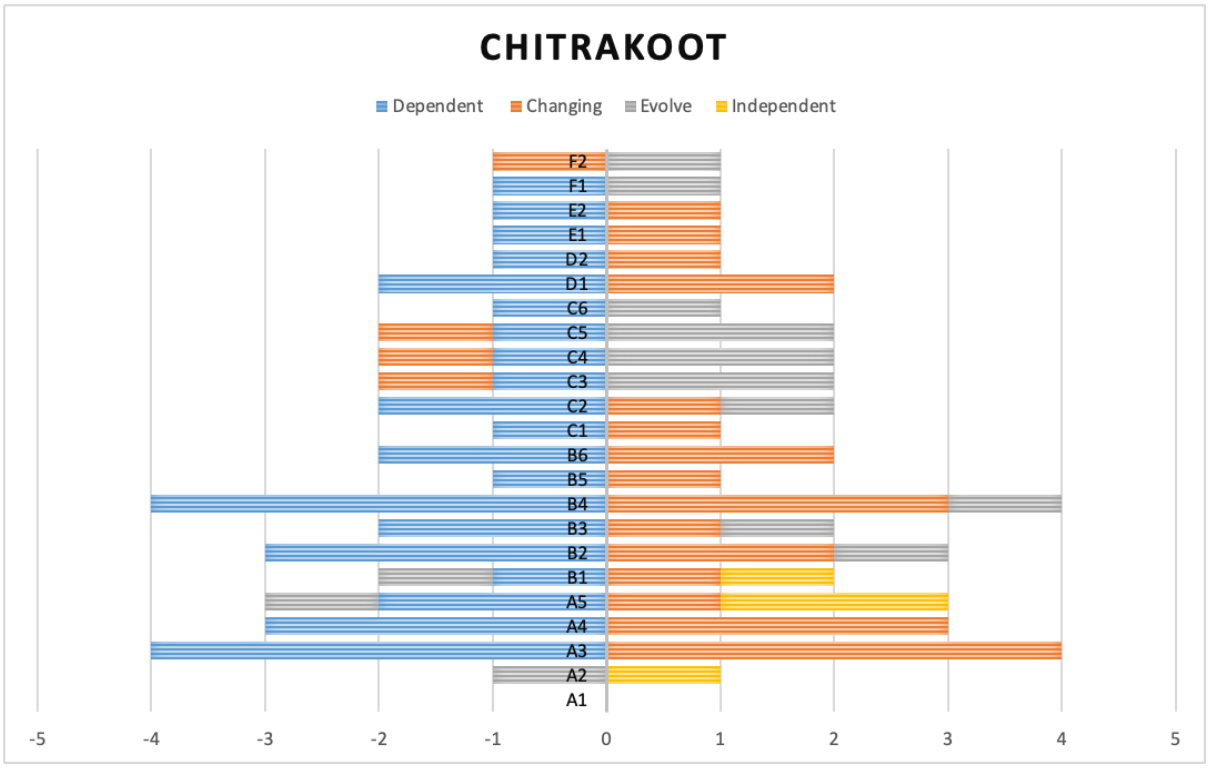
Analyzing socio-emotional skills reveals a decrease in children in the 'dependent' category and an increase in those in 'changing,' 'evolving,' or 'independent' categories. However, for M1 (mobility, coordination, and balance), there was a decrease in

'evolving' and an increase in 'changing.' In M2 (manipulative skills), there was an increase in the 'evolving' category but a drop in all other categories.

For cognitive and perceptual skills, there was a definite increase in the 'evolving' and 'independent' categories. In language and communication skills, there was an increase in the 'independent' categories, but for one task, L2 (expresses emotions and needs), there was a small increase in the 'dependent' category.

Of the 22 children, only 7 children were further assessed using the second assessment tool. Their performance on various tasks is presented below.

Figure 22: Performance of CWDs on tool 2 in Chitrakoot



The graph illustrates that within the task performance domain, children with disabilities (CWDs) have progressed towards 'changing' or 'independent' categories. In the domain of identification, naming, and understanding different concepts, there is a decrease in the 'dependent' category and an increase in the 'changing' category. Similarly, for arithmetic, there is a decrease in the 'dependent' and 'changing' categories, with an increase in the 'evolving' category. In terms of communication and writing, there is a decrease in the 'dependent' category and an increase in the 'changing' category. Regarding writing, children have shown an increase in the 'evolving' category.

Chapter V

Conclusions and Recommendations:

Prajayatna, through its inclusive education project, has achieved significant progress in the institutionalization of the inclusion of children with disabilities in government primary schools in Bahraich and Chitrakoot. The key findings for each of the four evaluation questions, along with the corresponding recommendations, are presented below. It is important to note that these recommendations are formulated with the assumption that the Kalikayatna project will be scaled up across various locations, blocks, and districts in the state. All the recommendations are essential for supporting the overall Kalikayatna program, contributing to its strengthening, consolidation, and future upscaling.

Goal 1: Determine the extent to which a learner centric environment has been created in the selected government primary schools

Conclusions:

The crucial aspects of Kalikayatna, particularly the integration of subjects and a departure from traditional textbook-focused teaching, have been successfully implemented across all visited schools. A significant accomplishment is the integration of Kalikayatna with FLN outcomes, emphasizing that it's not viewed as a separate intervention but rather as an approach fostering a learner-centric environment. Teachers have embraced new methods, especially working with mixed-age groups, to engage with all children effectively. The instructional format has shifted from rote-based methods to a more joyful and activity-based approach, utilizing various teaching-learning methods like whole group instruction, small group work, and individual practice.

Teacher Collectives stand out as a highly beneficial input, enabling teachers to collaboratively develop monthly plans, share experiences, discuss best practices, and seek solutions for challenges. Despite the shift to a prescriptive FLN lesson plan, teachers continue to create lesson plans for Kalikayatna classrooms based on collective meeting inputs. Teacher Collectives are recognized as a central strategy for strengthening the NPRC, building teacher autonomy, and enhancing confidence. Prajayatna's Cluster Coordinator's on-site support has played a crucial role in facilitating the implementation of various processes.

Significant positive changes have been observed in the participation of students with and without disabilities in classrooms. The atmosphere is characterized by friendliness and a lack of fear. Students demonstrate discipline, collaboration, and a willingness to learn from one another. They actively engage in activities, ask questions, and express themselves confidently.

However, there is a need for further capacity building in the area of assessment. While teachers acknowledge the importance of continuous and comprehensive assessment, there seems to be a perception of pressure from the department to track students on various parameters. Despite this understanding, actual assessment practices appear to fall short of being truly comprehensive, especially in covering various domains of learning.

Recommendations:

The Kalikayatna project has successfully demonstrated an alternative and inclusive approach to enhance teaching-learning processes in resource-poor schools, showcasing its potential for district-wide implementation. Given the positive impact of the Kalikayatna approach on various learning parameters and its success in achieving foundational literacy and numeracy outcomes, there is potential for scaling up the approach to cover the entire district. The philosophy and approach of the Kalikayatna project have been validated through the documentation of the model. To further strengthen this validation, collaboration with district-level educational personnel, including the Basic Shiksha Adhikari, becomes crucial. This expansion would require strategic planning, collaboration with district education authorities, alignment with broader educational planning for the district, and additional resources to support the widespread adoption.

In the further scaling up of the project, Prajayatna would need to partner with institutions such as the District Institute of Educational Training (DIET). Prajayatna could work closely with DIETS to support their pre-service and in-service training and integrate the Kalikayatna approach to equip all teachers at the district level with the necessary philosophy, pedagogical tools, methodologies, and subject expertise to address educational challenges effectively.

Collaborating with Mission Prerana could enhance the effectiveness of the Prajayatna approach across pedagogy, capacity building of teachers, and community engagement. Aligning assessment strategies with the specific outcomes associated with grades 1-5 would contribute to a more targeted and impactful approach.

A shift is needed from training only two teachers to including all teachers, including Shiksha Mitras, in the training process. Establishing mechanisms for the participation of all teachers in collective meetings, the central strategy for capacity building in the project, is crucial for the comprehensive implementation of the Kalikayatna approach across schools.

The capacity building component of onsite support to teachers needs to be further strengthened by developing a systematic plan. There is a need to establish a joint system of capacity building and monitoring involving officials from key government institutions, such as the district and block officials.

Intensive training on conducting continuous and comprehensive assessment aligned with NIPUN outcomes is crucial for teachers to effectively monitor and enhance students' learning.

Goal 2: Determine the extent to which children with disabilities have been included and provided quality inclusive education in selected government schools

Conclusions:

Prajayatna has played an important role in mobilizing and enrolling children with disabilities. During the project period, 203 children from both districts have been enrolled in schools. Of this Prajayatna has contributed 42.36% of enrollment. Prajayatna has been carrying out regular outreach visits to communities and identifying CWDs through home visits and convincing parents to send them to school.

Prajayatna has facilitated support for a total of 203 children to access various entitlements, including school enrollment, disability certification, AADHAR card, escort allowance, assistive devices tailored to their specific disabilities, stipends, opening bank accounts, and tablets. Prajayatna's comprehensive support initiatives encompassed the organization of camps and parental meetings, ensuring certification, conducting medical check-ups and measurement camps for the provision of aids and appliances, and arranging for experts to visit the homes of children with disabilities. These strategic interventions were recognized as critical for rehabilitating children with severe disabilities and enhancing the overall quality of their lives.

To institutionalize rehabilitation and information services for children with disabilities, Resource Centers have been set up in both districts. Presently, 26 children have accessed a range of services customized to their specific needs. These centers actively collaborate with local physicians, special educators, and department officials, forming partnerships to address the unique challenges faced by these children in terms of both learning and personal development. However, a notable limitation is the absence of specialized healthcare providers (doctors, psychologists, psychotherapists, speech therapists, etc.), causing delays in the certification process and, in some cases, treatment, including various therapies.

Teachers have received specific training on fostering inclusion and managing children with disabilities (CWDs) in their classrooms. Evidently, teachers have actively cultivated an inclusive environment, ensuring the participation of CWDs in the learning processes. Prajayatna's Teaching-Learning Materials, notably the Tactopus Learning Kits, have proven instrumental in teaching children with disabilities. All teachers reported collaborative efforts with Prajayatna staff and parents in developing Individualized Education Plans, which they largely adhere to for instruction and progress tracking of students. However, the comprehensive tracking tool designed by Prajayatna for monitoring CWDs' progress is not optimally utilized, primarily due to the considerable time investment and nuanced understanding it requires.

Teachers often grapple with strategies essential for advancing the learning of CWDs. While Prajayatna's onsite support has been beneficial to some extent, additional training and ongoing support are deemed necessary. The effectiveness of Inclusive Education Resource Teachers (IERTs) has been limited, primarily due to their inability to make regular school visits owing to their demanding workload.

The involvement of Inclusive Education Resource Teachers (IERTs) in both school-based and home-based education interventions is currently limited. This limitation is primarily attributed to the significant workload experienced by IERTs.

Interactions with parents of CWDs revealed that opportunities for higher education are limited for CWDs. For specific disabilities such as VI and HI, there are limited institutions in the district or even in the state. For those with intellectual ID and MD, the future pathways seem further narrowed.

Recommendations:

More specific inputs on different strategies for working with various types of disabilities are needed for teachers. Instead of training just one or two teachers, all teachers in the school need to be trained on working with children with disabilities. Drawing up a comprehensive capacity-building plan jointly by the district authorities and Prajayatna for teachers, department functionaries, and parents of CWDs would be required. Collaboration with key institutions such as DIET, the State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT), UNICEF, and other disability-related organizations in the state, as well as higher education institutions for people with disabilities, needs to be established.

Prajayatna needs to formulate a systematic plan to facilitate the educational progression of children with disabilities beyond primary school. Collaborating with the education department, like-minded institutions, and organizations at the state level is essential to identify diverse higher education possibilities based on the specific needs

and extent of disabilities of the students. Additionally, exploring vocational education options is crucial. However, providing a multidisciplinary approach within the framework of government schools might pose challenges. Obtaining support from key stakeholders, including the government for policy mandates and industry players for employment pathways, is essential to enhance the inclusivity of vocational learning across educational settings.

The Resource Center should be developed as a focal point for all rehabilitation-related services for children with disabilities. Additionally, there is a need to significantly enhance the capacities of IERTs and department officials. Seeking support from local organizations, disability groups, private schools, clinics, and hospitals may be required to enhance the capacities of the resource center. Networking with other departments for providing a holistic package of services for children with all types of disabilities is crucial.

Goal 3: Assess the extent to which the project has strengthened the ownership of primary school education by decentralized education governance structures

Over the years, Prajayatna has been able to create a conducive environment for children with disabilities in the community. Community is being seen as an identity and a form of diversity rather than solely a deficit. They recognize the rights of children with disabilities and the need for the provision of equal opportunities. The work on strengthening of community structures such as School Management Committees and Gram Panchayats took a backseat in the initial year owing to the pandemic. Subsequently in both districts, cluster-level workshops were conducted for Education Standing Committees (Shikshak Samiti) to familiarize them with their roles and responsibilities. GP-level meetings were organized to deliberate on the Panchayat's role in education, addressing issues related to schools and *anganwadis*, and developing action plans. GP-level network meetings were also convened, bringing together GP Pradhans, members, Education Standing Committee members, SMC members, and teachers to discuss school-related matters and supporting children with disabilities.

There appeared to be an evolving understanding of the Gram Panchayat's role in addressing infrastructural issues in schools, supporting enrollment, providing entitlements and facilities to children with disabilities and ensuring regular attendance of students and teachers. The Gram Panchayats have made significant contributions, particularly in improving school infrastructure. The visible improvements, observed during project school visits, were facilitated through "Operation Kayakalp," a Government of Uttar Pradesh initiative that allocates funds to the Gram Panchayat for school repair and maintenance. The rejuvenation efforts included constructing

boundary walls, ensuring safe and clean drinking water, installing piped water systems, providing hand washing units, and building kitchen sheds.

In most locations, SMCs are active and willing to participate in the school development processes. School level meetings held to orient them about the various roles and responsibilities w.r.t children and education- attendance, bridging learning gaps owing to COVID-19, inclusive learning environment at school, supporting, enrolment, learning and other needs of CWDs, supporting children in their learning at home, regular school visits and interactions with teachers, maintenance and upkeep of school premises, planning for school infrastructure and so on. In the newly formed SMCs (16), a parent of CWD has also been included.SMCs have achieved notable successes, particularly in increasing school attendance among irregular students. They have played a crucial role in ensuring that Direct Benefit Transfer reaches all students, providing entitlements such as textbooks, uniforms, and transport allowances. Additionally, all SMCs have been actively involved in enhancing the physical infrastructure of schools, resulting in an overall improvement in the school environment. In some schools, SMCs also discuss the progress of children with parents.

Overall, one can see improved relationships between teachers, parents and SMC members. There is greater awareness about education in SMCs and GPs. Most remarkable improvements in the physical environment of schools is seen in instances where there is a close coordination between the GP and SMC.

Recommendations

There is a clear need for SMCs and GPs to move beyond resolving issues such as infrastructure, enrollment retention, and teacher attendance that have been addressed in most project schools. While several SMC members have begun to monitor students' learning and progress, teaching-learning in classrooms, and teachers dealing with children with disabilities, their capabilities need to be built considerably in these areas.

Greater transparency and accountability in the process of forming the SMC are required. There needs to be a focus on creating awareness about the roles and responsibilities of SMC members in the composition and selection procedure of SMCs. Guidelines on the election process must be clearly expressed and shared openly with the chairperson, school head, and other SMC members. It needs to be democratic, involving all parents, and especially giving due representation to parents of children with disabilities.

Dedicated modules should be developed for capacity building in the areas of financial information and the development of SDP.

There needs to be a further focus to strengthen GPs, enabling them to develop into mature organizations delivering their mandate through a structured organizational development approach. Further work needs to be taken up in the areas of activation of Standing Committees on Education.

There is a need to further support the GP Pradhan with the required knowledge to perform their roles with respect to education.

Goal 4: Ascertain the percentage of learners who demonstrate improvement in learning outcomes

Conclusions:

Foundational Literacy and Numeracy:

A cohort of 302 children, divided into two groups (A and B), underwent an assessment to gauge their progress in literacy and numeracy. These groups were in grades 2 and 3 at the baseline and transitioned to grades 4 and 5 at the endline. Notably, the tool used was not grade-appropriate, considering the children had recently returned to school after pandemic-related closures. The literacy assessment encompassed dimensions like reading comprehension and phonological awareness, while the numeracy assessment covered aspects such as number sense, number operations, measurement, time, money, and data.

At baseline, the proportion of children correctly answering the literacy questions was 25.86%, and for numeracy, it was 28.51%. This proportion witnessed a substantial increase, reaching 81.54% for literacy and 78% for numeracy at the endline.

For Group A, the literacy score increased from 22.05% at baseline to 80.09% at endline, and the numeracy score rose from 28.34% to 76.80%. Similarly, for Group B, the literacy score improved from 24.05% to 82.47%, while the numeracy score increased from 49.23% to 78.77%. All groups achieved scores above 78% at the endline, with the most significant improvement observed in Group B for literacy. The least change was noted in Group B for numeracy, which started at 49.23% at baseline and progressed to 78.77% at endline.

There were no significant differences between the performance of boys and girls in literacy at both baseline and endline. However, for numeracy, girls demonstrated slightly better performance at baseline, and this trend persisted even at endline.

The most notable change in literacy occurred in decoding, with the percentage increasing significantly from 25.71% at baseline to 91.5%. In contrast, the performance

change for other dimensions of reading, such as comprehension, phonological awareness, and writing, showed a relatively consistent pattern. In reading comprehension, the cohort exhibited a significant increase from a moderate initial assessment at 30.19% to 86.09% at endline. In terms of phonological awareness, the cohort demonstrated a score of 21.94% at baseline, which significantly improved to 76.24% at endline. For writing, the initial baseline score of 25.37% showed substantial improvement, reaching 78.84% at the endline.

The most notable improvement in performance in numeracy can be seen in the dimension of number sense. From a moderate level of understanding and proficiency in number sense (30.68%), the cohort achieved a substantial increase by the endline (82.48%). However, it is worrisome to note the change in performance in number operations, measuring competencies related to the addition and subtraction of two digits. The initial assessment indicates 25.66% proficiency in executing arithmetic operations. Although there is improvement at the endline (38.82%), the percentage suggests progress, with room for further enhancement. There has been a significant improvement in performance in the dimensions of measurement, time, money, and data. The cohort, starting with a baseline achievement of 28.55%, progressed to 74.5% by the endline. In the domain of measurement, there was a noteworthy improvement. Starting with a baseline performance of 24.33%, the cohort demonstrated a significant advancement, achieving a score of 77.64% at the endline.

Varied abilities of Children:

A separate tool was used to assess children's abilities across attitudinal domains. This task focused on problem-solving, including problem identification, evaluation, recognition of feelings, empathy, and finding solutions. Both Group A and Group B demonstrated varying degrees of problem-solving abilities across different parameters, with some differences in the extent of their responses.

Performance of Children with Disabilities:

Two separate assessment tools are utilized for evaluating children with disabilities. The initial tool assesses all children with disabilities, and those demonstrating significant progress undergo further evaluation using the second tool.
In Bahraich, the first tool was applied to assess 27 children, with 12 subsequently evaluated using the second tool. In Chitrakoot, the first tool was employed to assess 22 children, and 7 underwent evaluation with the second tool.

Bahraich:

Children demonstrated significant advancements in self-help skills, with an increase in the 'independent' category and a decline in 'dependent' and other categories. Socio-emotional skills showed positive changes, particularly in the 'independent' category for peer engagement. Motor skills exhibited progress with an increase in 'evolving' and 'independent' categories. Cognitive and perceptual skills displayed improvement in both 'independent' and 'evolving' categories. Language and communication skills, however, saw an increase in the 'evolving' category, while the 'independent' category dropped for specific parameters.

However, the assessment results for the second tool indicated dropping performance across most domains.

Chitrakoot:

Positive trends include increased independence in self-help tasks, particularly in toileting and personal grooming. Socio-emotional skills show improvement, with reduced dependency and more children transitioning to higher self-reliance levels. In mobility and manipulative skills, there are mixed results, with changes in evolving and independent categories. Cognitive and perceptual skills exhibit a notable increase in evolving and independent categories. Language and communication skills generally improve, but one task sees a slight increase in the dependent category.

Evaluation with the second tool indicated an increase in the 'changing' and 'evolving' categories, with some children moving into the 'independent' categories.

Recommendations:

The findings offer insights into learning levels, guiding the refinement of learning trajectories. Prajayatna and stakeholders can use this information to identify areas for improvement and develop targeted strategies to support learning. District-specific analysis raises awareness among stakeholders, identifies curricular dimensions, and prompts pedagogical adjustments for achieving learning outcomes.

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Prajayatna

No.331, 1st A Main, 7th Block, Jayanagar (West), Bengaluru - 560 070

Tel: 080 - 26769676, E-mail: prajayatna@prajayatna.in, Website: www.prajayatna.in