



Gramin Shiksha Kendra

# GRAMIN SHIKSHA KENDRA

2018





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## About GSK

GSK was set up to alter the status quo in the government education space. GSK was established in 2004 and now operates 3 free schools for the children of classes 1 to 8 in Sawai Madhopur, Rajasthan.

We have challenged the status quo in the education system of the district by bringing communities to question the quality of education in government schools, and have begun to change it by encouraging the community to seek accountability from the schools. To bring the community on board, and make them aware of what quality should mean, we have demonstrated our approach through the three schools we have set up and which we manage with the community. We also help government schools evolve through a multi-dimensional approach involving work with children, school management committees, community and government school teachers.

The Uday schools have evolved as Centres of Excellence in the area. About 550 children attend classes in Uday schools. The schools are run by our team of 40 motivated teachers. In addition they also support 60 government schools in the vicinity, where they work through the Vistaar programme as part of our outreach. 60 schools are supported under this programme covering 9,000 children and 400 government teachers. Our work is changing the face of education in the way it is perceived, imparted and received. It has begun to impact the communities, teachers and children in the area which is perhaps one of the most forgotten areas of Rajasthan.



## Vision & Mission



Thoughtful, supportive and sensitive children will create a world which is equitable, empathetic and supportive, and which believes in peaceful coexistence and celebrates diversity and culture. Education can make this happen.

GSK aims to create an education ecosystem that can set children free and help them be curious, supportive, sensitive, thoughtful, aware, open to learning and have the abilities to take on responsibilities and fulfill them.



## What we see as Quality Education?

Learners who are **healthy, well-nourished** and **ready to participate** and **learn**, and **supported in learning by their families and communities**.

School environments that are healthy, safe, protective, inclusive, non-hierarchical, democratic and gender-sensitive; and provide adequate resources and facilities and are governed by peoples' institutions (SMCs).

Content that is reflected in relevant curricula and materials for the acquisition of basic skills, especially in the areas of literacy, numeracy and skills for life, and

knowledge in such areas as science, social sciences, health and nutrition. The content also promotes a culture of peaceful co-existence by appreciating diversity and the need for peace. Environment, conservation, gender, governance, and development are all interlinked in the curriculum.

Classroom processes through which trained teachers use child-centered teaching approaches in well managed democratic classrooms and comprehensive assessments to facilitate learning and reduce disparities.



# Our Approach

**When communities demand quality education the government school system becomes accountable and can function to its full potential. GSK believes that communities can lead such change and our task is to provide them tools to support them. Based on experiences in the education space, GSK has defined its role in four key areas:**

1. Activate and Empower SMCs
2. Demonstrate Quality Education to Parents
3. Equip Teachers with Effective and Tested School Management Systems and TLM
4. Instill Confidence in Children by Providing Them All Round Exposure



# Activate and Empower SMCs

## *SMC's: Demanding and Driving Change*

School management committees are powerful bodies that have been mandated to oversee the functioning of schools under the RTE. However in practice, they are either not functional or if they are, they are not effectively used by communities due to lack of awareness of its role.

GSK's task is to make these SMCs aware, increase participation of parents, demand requisite infrastructure and quality education, monitor school functioning, teacher performance and assess children's progress.







## 1. Ganganagar, the community that moved mountains to get their school back

In 2017, at the opening of the academic session, in a bid to rationalize the number of schools, the government decided to merge two schools of Sukhwas and Ganganagar, 4 km apart from each other. The reason given was low enrollment. The real reason was poor quality of education and mismanagement in the Ganganagar School that led to the students moving to private schools in the hope of better education. Realizing the difficulty of sending their wards to another village and losing an important institution from their village, the Ganganagar community took the onus of bringing their school back.

The Uday Vistaar initiative provided support to the school. On their suggestion, the parents struck-off the names of their children from other schools and brought them back to their own village school. As there was no appointed teacher in the school, the parents appointed youth members from the village to teach their children in the abandoned school campus, so as not to discontinue their

education. During this situation of non-availability of teachers, the Vistaar team also provided services to the school on daily basis. The community continuously kept pressurizing the government to revoke their decision of closing the school. Finally, after nearly three months of efforts, the administration accepted the demands of the community to reopen the school in their village and appointed a teacher. The enrollment in school has now reached to 90. Almost all the parents in the village are sending their children in the government school and promise to ensure the quality education for their children.

The community of Ganganagar village, through their courage and determination, has not only saved their school from getting merged with the nearby government school but have now taken the baton by themselves to ensure quality education for their children.

**87% raise issues parents raise issues in SMC and parents meetings.**

## 2. Ajeetpura – Making Teachers Accountable

Gramin Shiksha Kendra organized a SMC Sammelan at Bodal where the roles and responsibilities of School Management Committees were discussed with the SMCs of all the schools covered under the Vistaar programme. The discussions and experience-sharing by other SMCs inspired the SMC members of the government school of Ajeetpura and they reached their school on the very next day to assess the situation. Amongst other things it was found that one teacher was consistently late in coming to school. The SMC questioned the teacher and though the teacher had a number of excuses, the SMC was unwilling to take them.

The SMC was quite clear that the first process of change would be making sure that the teachers began coming to school regularly and on time. The SMC gave him an ultimatum and under pressure from the community, the teacher has now bought a motorcycle to commute to school. He is now on time each day and more importantly, the SMC has realized their power and their responsibility in making the school function properly.

## 3. Women taking charge of the SMCs

Gramin Shiksha Kendra emphasizes strongly on the participation of women in the school-related affairs and organizes School Management Committee (SMC) Conferences every year. Earlier, there was a meager participation of women SMC members where only 2-3 women would show up. In the SMC Sammelan (SMC Conference) held in 2017, we witnessed a rise in the participation of women, where 30 women shared their experiences and opinions about education in public. We see this as an important development and the role that women play both as members of the committee and mothers is helping change their perception about themselves, about their children, about the schools and about education.

**The participation of the community has improved and has been appreciated by both parents and the teachers.**





## **Some Statistics on our work with SMC's:**

GSK's RBM tool has mapped out and graded all 60 SMCs in terms of their functioning, participation of parents specially mothers, facilities in school, teacher monitoring and evaluation:

- 1. 100% of the SMCs are functioning**
- 2. 53% of SMCs conduct regular monthly meetings.**
- 3. 11% are in Grade A (the best functioning) where SMCs are holding government and teachers accountable and demanding proper infrastructure.**
- 4. 78% are in Grade B & C that need improvement**
- 5. 11% are in Grade D where the community needs to be motivated to actively participate in the process of education.**

# Demonstrate Quality Education to Parents

## *Parents understanding the benefits of Quality Education*

Dysfunctional government schools inspire no confidence in parents, who resort to enrolling their children in private schools of dubious quality and often see little improvement in their children's learning abilities and all round development.

GSK's task is to demonstrate what quality education can be and how children regardless of their background, are able to learn and develop to their full potential, increase parents' involvement with teachers, experience GSK centres of excellence.

To this effect, GSK has set up 3 schools (in Jaganpura, Faria, Girirajpura villages) that serve as centres of excellence. These schools impart education using child-centred processes in multi-level and/or multi-grade classrooms, and continuously and comprehensively assess children's progress that ensure interest and improved performance in academics and co-scholastic activities such as sports, pottery, carpentry and theatre.

Kilol, a concept developed by GSK, is an annual festival to celebrate the education, to let the communities participate in the movement for quality education.



**1,609 families  
have been visited  
in 60 schools for  
exposure and  
monitoring.**



## 1. Communities taking charge of the schools

The focus of GSK's work is to enable the communities demand quality education and we are beginning to see the communities understand the nuances of quality in the education. These communities have started helping their schools in provisioning the right environment for education.

The community of Kundera village donated fans and a water cooler to their school. The community from Mukundpura contributed in the form of installing a main gate and got the toilets repaired in the school premise.

The classrooms of Uday School, Jaganpura were damaged by high speed winds and the community pitched in to repair the roofs.

In Girirajpura, the community took the responsibility of getting the classroom constructed. In this process, they also contributed in the form of 'Shram-daan (contribution in the form of labour)' while constructing the classroom.



**In 84% of the schools, parents make regular visits and observe the environment in the schools.**

**63% of the women SMC members raise issues in their monthly SMC meetings.**



## 2.Uday Schools – providing a nurturing environment to children

The Superintendent of Police of Sawai Madhopur enrolled his 3 years old daughter Ananya in Uday School at Sawai Madhopur. She remained there for a year, where she used to play, sing, dance and learn through various activities. Ananya loved the environment in the school. She enjoyed being in the company of her teacher and other children at school.

The next year, her father was transferred to another district. In the new location, there was an altogether different environment in the school. Ananya felt lost in this new environment and was reluctant to go to school. Her father had to often make her talk to the Uday teachers on the phone, hoping to convince Ananya to start going to the new school happily.

This maybe Ananya's story but demonstrates the need and importance to make the school a happy and loving place which makes children want to go to school. The school is not a scary evil space as is made out to be. It also shows the children are happy to learn and enjoy while they learn.



**124 mother meetings have been held to give the women confidence to get involved in the education of their wards.**



# Equip Teachers with Effective and Tested School Management Systems

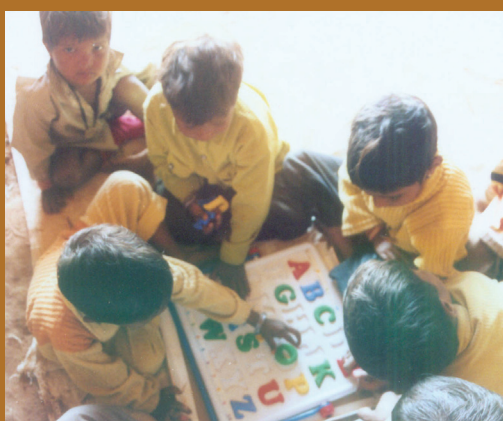
*Teachers taking ownership and learning a new pedagogy*

GSK teachers reach out to share learning from the Uday schools to 60 government schools in the Vistaar programme.

While pressure from SMCs and parents can help in monitoring a teacher's activities, they also require continuous training and enhancement of capacities, outlook and teaching pedagogies.

GSK assists them to adopt progressive methods of school and classroom management, planning lessons in line with the curriculum; introduce child centred learning processes, develop and use teaching learning material, undertake continuous and comprehensive evaluation, create and strengthen SMCs and introduce the idea of democratic functioning by setting up student bodies called Bal Panchayats.

GSK also runs a STEAM Lab in Bodal village that focuses on the fundamentals of physics, chemistry, biology and maths, amongst both government teachers and students of the 60 schools in the Vistaar programme.



## 1. Adopting Schools

Under the Adopt a School programme, GSK teachers took over the operations of 2 Government of Rajasthan schools in Bodal and Sawai Madhopur city between 2011-12 and 2016-17. Applying all systems developed in Uday schools, GSK has been able to hand over these schools back to the government teachers, who now have the full confidence of running them efficiently.



**GSK has conducted  
180 trainings for  
teachers across  
60 Vistaar schools**

## 2. Manju Sharma, Learning a new way – and now advocating it

Government school teachers are trained in a standard way and follow the traditional class room practices where the children are usually on the teacher either on the blackboard or on the chair and all children following a common class. Manju Sharma was no different. She had little exposure to any other form.

The Vistaar programme helped change that. Through class room demonstrations the Vistaar team exposed her to the multi-level multi-grade system and the use of carefully designed teaching and learning material. While it was a

big change for her, she noticed two important changes by doing this. She found that the children were far more attentive when she was speaking with them, using teaching and learning material made it so much easier to communicate with the children and most importantly she was able to see a major change in the learning levels of the children.

The best part however is that she is now sharing these ideas with other government school teachers.

### 3. Sharifa Bano, Changing the Education Ecosystem

Ms. Sharifa Bano is the head-teacher of Government School, Bodal. Gramin Shiksha Kendra adopted the school in the year 2012 for five years.

Initially she was reluctant to the methods of building a child-centric environment proposed by GSK but slowly she began to understand its importance and began supporting the Uday pedagogy.

Gradually, she also started to involve parents and School Management Committee in all school related matters. As the school was getting limited funds from the government, the maintenance of toilets and water facility was also an issue. She encouraged the parents to support the school financially which the parents appreciated and agreed to.

While many schools do not wish to involve the parents in running the Mid-day meal programme at school, Sharifa asked parents and SMCs' assistance to keep an eye on the procurement and quality standards of the meal.

The school is now witnessing regular monthly SMC meetings with a pre-decided agenda that is followed by proper documentation. Today, Sharifa shows the confidence of running her school effectively without being dependent on Gramin Shiksha Kendra.

It's not a surprise that the school shows 100 percent enrollment. Over 90% regularity and also a 100 % enrollment and more that 80% regularity of children coming to the Bodal aanganwadi which is adjacent to the school – all set to make it to her school in the next couple of years.



**Increased number of co-scholastic activities involved in the school curriculum: Teachers have appreciated the idea of activity-based learning and few of them are practicing it in their classrooms.**



## **Some Statistics on work with Teachers:**

- 1. 100% schools are asking for guidance from GSK teachers to conduct CCE.**
- 2. 84% schools teachers have started using GSK's school management systems**
- 3. 17 schools have visited, experienced and appreciated the idea of STEAM lab.**
- 4. STEAM lab teachers have visited are working with 17 schools to demonstrate experiment-based teaching in Science and mathematics.**
- 5. Better teacher-child relationship as teachers participate in activities such as sports, maintaining cleanliness, songs, and other co-scholastic activities.**
- 6. They have started to sit on the ground with kids.**
- 7. Corporal Punishment has become rare in the government schools.**
- 8. Child-centric pedagogy followed in classrooms.**
- 10. Use of TLM and activity-based teaching being followed in the classrooms.**
- 11. Government teachers have started participating in the morning assemblies and cleanliness activities with the children.**

# Instill Confidence in Children by Providing Them All Round Exposure

*Children taking charge of their destiny and following their dreams*

Gramin Shiksha Kendra works with the most disenfranchised communities in one of the most backward areas of Rajasthan. GSK's work has proved that children can and do learn if provided the right stimulus and opportunities.

GSK's task is to instill the values that will hold them in good stead and enable them to take their own decisions in life with confidence. Apart from giving them a strong grasp on each subject to improve academic performance, GSK also exposes them to co-scholastics activities like sports, pottery, carpentry and theatre.



## 1. Seema, the girl who redefined her own fate

Seema belongs to a poor family dependent on the farming. Her mother works as farm labour. Her father on the other hand is alcoholic and spends this hard earned money on his poor habits and often engages in arguments and fights with other family members.

In this environment Seema received the support from Gramin Shiksha Kendra and since then, despite her family protesting against her education, she has continued her studies in Uday Community School, Jaganpura. She also excelled in sports and is currently the captain of the Rajasthan Under-14 Girls' Handball Team.

When her parents forced her to get married this year, she protested against child-marriage and asked for the support from her teachers, other NGOs and the District Collector. This was widely reported in the local media. In the end, her parents had to give-in Seema was back to the Uday School. Impressed by the courage of Seema, the District Collector has decided to adopt her as daughter and has assured of financially and morally supporting her education.



## 2. Meghraj – flying high

Meghraj, the eldest among his siblings, was brought up by his father who is a small farmer in the area. Meghraj does not have a mother and has a sibling who has a disability. His father was determined to ensure his children received a good education. The father's struggle gradually transformed the children, particularly Meghraj, into being more responsible and together with his three siblings he completely devoted himself to education and kept working to earn for a living.

Meghraj graduated with extremely good grades from Uday Community School and went to complete his studies further and graduated in science. He also had interest in theater and sports, where he played at the national level.



After graduation, Meghraj volunteered with Gramin Shiksha Kendra and few other NGOs, helping the village communities and the younger children in the school and his village. He applied and was accepted as an 'air-man' in the Indian Air Force and is currently a part of the 'Garuda Force', a special force created for safety of the national air bases.



### 3. Priya Meena and Manraj Meena, they dared to reach for the stars

Priya and Manraj Meena belong to farming families close to Uday School in Jaganpura. Priya passed grade 5 from Uday Community School, Jaganpura in 2008 while Manraj passed grade 8 from Uday Community School, Jaganpura in 2009.

Both followed up on their education sincerely and the main learning they took with them from Uday was their ability to be 'self-learners'.

As a result of this supportive environment at Uday Community Schools, they both cleared the advanced level of JEE in 2017.



### 4. The Theatre team that followed their passion

A team of 14 children from Uday schools participated in National Nascent Drama Festival organized at Pauri Garhwal in 2007. The team enacted 'Ali Baba Chalis Chor'. There was no age-limit on the participating teams and our team members were the youngest of them all.

This team left their impression on all the participants and judges and finally stood runners-up in the event.



## 5. Sports in Uday – new and powerful for the area

Ranwal is a village situated 2 km away from Uday Community School, Jaganpura. Many of the Uday graduates (class 8 students) take admission in the Government School of Ranwal in grade 9.

Earlier, like many other government schools, there was no participation of children from the government school of Ranwal in any sports event. For the past 5 years, the handball and football teams of Ranwal in under-17 category are not only participating at district level but also getting through into the final rounds.



The Handball team of Ranwal has remained the undefeated champion at the district level since the last two years.

## 6. Lakshmi never gave up and neither did GSK

Lakshmi was a mentally challenged child in the Government school in Sawai Madhopur. She was left by herself in class and never really attended to by the government teachers. We were told that she would never be able to read or write.

Our teachers provided a fear-free learning environment in the school, where the child gradually started to speak-up. By forming the sub-groups within the class as per the learning levels of the children, teachers paid attention to Lakshmi's learning level.

The school also provided her environment such as sports or morning assembly, where she could mix-up with other children. Today, Lakshmi can read and write in Hindi, perform standard mathematical operations and is at a healthy average levels in other subjects. She also leads songs and poems in the morning school assembly.



# Our Work with Children

## Children at Uday Schools

1. An increase from 40% attendance to nearly 80% regularity, over the last 14 years, has shown that the community, parents and children are positively experiencing the environment that has been created around these centres of excellence.
2. 100% of Grade 5 students are able to read a Grade 5 book compared to other government schools in Rajasthan where nearly 45% of the children can read Grade 2 text. *[Source: ASER Report 2016]*
3. 0% failure rate at Grade 8 and 10 levels.
4. Drop-out rate has been reduced to 0% from almost 40% from Class 8 to Class 9.
5. The teacher-pupil ratio has been maintained at 1:15 to ensure development of each child at his/her own speed.
6. Use of bad language amongst Uday children is nil, they show an exemplary attitude towards their environment, natural resources.
7. In 2017, 2 Uday graduates cleared the advance level of IIT exams.





8. 100% participation in co-scholastic activities like creative writing, arts, assembly, pottery, carpentry, stage performance and theatre activities.
9. 3 Uday school girls have excelled in Handball and play at State and National level teams; 1 girl represents the state team in Kho-Kho; 1 boy represents the state team in Football.
10. Over 60 children from Uday schools have played at the State/National level CCE has been the norm to measure and chart out the performance of all children even before it was mandated by the RTE act.

### **Children at Vistaar schools**

1. Vistaar schools have witnessed a change in the environment which is becoming more child-centric.
2. Sports are becoming an essential component of the usual school routine.
3. Over 80 students have been selected in district, state and national team teams of Kabbadi, Handball, Kho-Kho, Football, Athletics.
4. Our baseline and end-line assessment results show that in the session 2016-17, there has been an improvement in about 15 percentage points in the overall score of the children in 60 schools.

# Other Programmes

## *Adolescent Girls' Education Programme*

With Ashoka Foundation, we piloted an education programme with a cohort of 36 'almost-dropping-out-girls' studying in class 9. We have worked with one cohort of 36 girls as a pilot of which 35 have cleared the Class 9 exam and are continuing their education.



## *Anganwadi Initiative*

To streamline entry of children in to the primary sections of school and to ensure early childhood care and development which is the cornerstone for education we are piloting initiatives in 10 schools. We see a marked improvement in primary education levels following a good intervention in the Anganwadi. It is our target that all children should seamlessly move from an Anganwadi to class 1 in all government schools.

## *Computer Initiative*

GSK has started a computer literacy programme in Faria, in association with Computer Shiksha®, for delivering an automated course to all students. This programme consists of 2 modules - Basic and Advanced - for 32 weeks & 30 weeks respectively. 2 classes a week are held for each student and covers learning parts of a computer, using MS Paint to draw, naming and organizing files, word processing & formatting, using spreadsheets and presentation skills, internet applications for browsing & searching and E-mails.

## *STEAM*

STEAM to improve the levels of understanding in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths, and to encourage the study of Arts and Humanities, GSK has set up a centre for children to experiment, explore, engage with learning in Bodal. The Centre is working with 17 schools around Bodal. The Centre will also function as a resource for Government teachers.

## *Kilol*

Kilol aims to bring the school and its community together to celebrate education and make it a joyous occasion. Kilol is an annual event and has been on since 2004 in GSK schools. In 2015-16 the first Kilol was held in a government school. In 2016-17 the Kilol idea was spread to 5 government schools and communities. We envisage that schools and communities will allocate one day each year to celebrate education and jointly organize a Kilol each year.

# Recognition

## *Ashoka Changemaker School*

In 2015 Uday schools were recognized by the Ashoka Foundation as schools that are making a difference in education systems in India.

## *Princess Diya Kumari, MLA - Sawai Madhopur*

Says that "I truly appreciate the initiatives and programs run and supported by Gramin Shiksha Kendra in the constituency and I do hope that we can build in this success and continue and expand your programs to reach even more people in Sawai Madhopur."

## *District Collector*

The Collector has appreciated the confidence of GSK students and offered support for Seema Meena who wanted to pursue her studies and sports rather than getting trapped in child marriage like her sister was forced into.

## *DEO, BEO*

DEO and BEO signed MOUs and appreciated the work of Gramin Shiksha Kendra - "Gramin Shiksha Kendra is putting great efforts in improving the learning level of children in the subjects such as Science and Mathematics. I hope that the initiative will help students in building their understanding in these subjects."

## *Anand Trivedi, Development and Resource Mobilization, United Nations Development Programme*

Says that "GSK' multi-pronged approach to education and skill development by interweaving sports, STEM, and adolescent girl focused components have really impacted the life of many children in the area"



# Scaling up GSK operations

1. Expand the scope of Vistaar from 60 government schools to all schools in Sawai Madhopur and Khandar blocks of Sawai Madhopur district in 10 years.
2. **SMCs**: In 3 years, from 10% in Grade D and 12% in Grade A to NONE in Grade D and almost 80% in Grade A.
3. **Kilol**: 1 per year to every school per year – one in each government school in 10 years.
4. **Adolescent Girls' Education Programme**: With Ashoka Foundation, we piloted an education programme with a cohort of 36 girls studying in class 9. The success of the programme has motivated us to design a more comprehensive programme to take on 10 more cohorts (working with 300 girls per year) and helping them through academic support and life skills to cope and evolve them into self-confident individuals.
5. **Anganwadi**: We have piloted work with Anganwadis and have seen a marked improvement in primary education levels following a good intervention in the Anganwadi. It is our target that

all children should seamlessly move from an Anganwadi to class 1 in all government schools. We plan a more comprehensive aanganwadi initiative covering all schools in Sawai Madhopur and Khandar blocks in Sawai Madhopur district in 10 years.

6. **STEAM:** Expanding the outreach of STEAM initiative to all the government schools in Khandar and Sawai Madhopur blocks.
7. Computer Education with Computer Shiksha to schools and teachers in our field of operations.





Gramin Shiksha Kendra  
<http://graminshiksha.org.in/>