

VASS Effects Monitoring Report - Super

GENERAL INFORMATION

Total Villages in the Programme	227	100%
Villages being monitored	204	90%
Member Families	6,228	
No of School-age Children (5-16 yrs)	8,798	100%
Children receiving Programme Benefit	6,960	79%

	Children		Boys	Girls	SC/ST	Middle	Upper
Primary School (1 to 5)	2,763	40%	50%	50%	64%	15%	21%
Middle School (6 to 7)	1,621	23%	51%	49%	65%	16%	19%
High School (8 to 10)	2,159	31%	57%	43%	61%	15%	24%
PUC	297	4%	64%	36%	58%	10%	32%
Degree	106	2%	78%	22%	72%	8%	20%
Diploma/Other	11	0%	100%	0%	45%	27%	27%
NFE	1	0%	100%	0%	100%	0%	0%
Total	6,958		53%	47%	63%	15%	22%

No of Schools		288	100%
Primary Schools	144	50%	
Middle Schools	86	30%	
High Schools	58	20%	

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A. GENDER EQUITY ESTABLISHED FOR THE GIRL CHILD & DISADVANTAGED GROUPS

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RESULTS (as on 31 Dec 2004)

Monitored this Effect	117 Villages (52%)
Successes	57 Children from 44 Villages; 9 Marriages from 9 Villages; 20 Youth from 9 Villages
Partial Successes	7 Children from 6 Villages; 46 Youth from 38 Villages
Failures	90 Children from 53 Villages; 3 Youth from 1 Village
Attitudinal Problems	4 CSUs

It would be trite to suggest that sexual discrimination has been stopped and the caste system abolished through efforts of an NGO programme. Sustained Results can be claimed only when gender just trends are maintained for many generations, through persistent and unrelenting attention. This Effects indicator is therefore a sentinel which has to stay in place for a very long time in any Strategic Plan. The below Results should therefore be read to reflect current PRACTICES in programme villages, rather than as a cultural statement on patriarchy.

>> Finally, and at long last, we can claim that far less girls are withdrawn from school when they are 12-13 years old. Drop-out rates of girls at the age of puberty have plummeted from 41% in 2001-02 to 28% at present. This Result owes more to years of gender emphasis within the Coolie Sangha than to the nascent 6 month old VASS Programme.

InfoNeeds

>> There have been no cases of under-age marriage for the past 6 months. But it would be an empty boast to claim any great cultural change. The sad truth is that 9 parents did attempt to "fulfil their duty" by marrying off young girls and ridding a responsibility. The number could be higher since only half the programme villages were monitored by the respective Balakendra Teachers.

>> Insofar as retaining youth (boys and girls) in school, it is only now that we are beginning to see concrete Results with an absolute fall in the number of young people out-of-school. In 2001-02, 39% of the 12-16 year old population was out of school. Now the figure is 26%. But if there is any slip in fresh school admission and retention of 6 year olds, the out-of-school youth problem will resurface.

>> On the minus side, we recognise a definite need to sensitise ourselves on Disability issues and problems faced by Physically Challenged children. Results obtained up until now have been rather ad hoc.

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B. GOVERNMENT SCHOOL INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVED

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RESULTS (as on 31 Dec 2004)

Monitored this Effect	193 Villages (85%)
Successes	10 Rooms from 9 Villages; 57 Schools from 57 Villages; 377 Villages
Partial Successes	43 Teachers from 18 Villages; 62 Sets from 20 Villages; 191 Rooms from 102 Villages; 293 Villages
Failures	4 Villages
Attitudinal Problems	37 CSUs

The government has good plans and ample resources to improve school infrastructure. But these stay unimplemented unless there is pressure from the bottom up. The Coolie Sangha has played an effective and responsible role in this regard. They have acted with a judicious mix of rights based struggles balanced with constructive cooperation. Many innovative solutions have been found to temporarily solve problems till permanent infrastructure is installed.

>> 218 schools (75%) have enough classrooms and 162 (56%) have adequate furniture. 10 more schools have classrooms under construction and so this can be considered a partial Result. 55 schools (19%) have applied to the government, but this Result is still in the pipeline.

>> 188 schools (65%) have playgrounds of their own, and 25 village CSUs have made arrangements with Ryots for children to play on private fields.

>> 216 schools (75%) have drinking water arrangements within their compounds and village CSUs have made temporary arrangements in another 33 (11%). But depleting groundwater makes this Result questionable since the water problem of children is genuinely solved in only 76 schools (26%).

>> 74 schools (26%) have kitchens to cook mid-day meals and CSUs have made temporary arrangements in another 56 (19%). The rest just "manage".

>> Records show that 139 schools (48%) have toilets for girls, but in reality only 42 (15%) schools offer girl students this dignity.

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C. QUALITY OF TEACHING IMPROVED

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RESULTS (as on 31 Dec 2004)

Monitored this Effect	182 Villages (80%)
Successes	161 Villages

Partial Successes 21 Villages

The greatest impediment to quality of teaching is the apathy of government school Teachers. There has been much improvement in the situation these past 6 months, and credit has to be attributed to constant vigil and agitation by secondary stakeholders of the VASS Programme.

>> Teacher : Student ratio now stands at an acceptable 1:32.

>> Children from 160 villages reported that lessons were taught on time, against 86 before the start of the VASS Programme.

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D. PARENT PARTICIPATION IMPROVED

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RESULTS (as on 31 Dec 2004)

Monitored this Effect	186 Villages (82%)
Successes	224 Govt School Teachers from 119 Villages; 161 CSUs; 2,726 Children from 56 Villages
Partial Successes	132 Govt School Teachers from 52 Villages; 2,817 Children from 119 Villages
Failures	2 Govt School Teachers from 1 Village; 21 CSUs; 43 Children from 4 Villages
Attitudinal Problems	9 CSUs

All the Results obtained under this Effects Indicator can be directly and entirely attributed to Balakendra Teachers, secondary stakeholders in the VASS Programme.

>> Due to increased CSU Member participation, School Development & Monitoring Committees are no longer perfunctory bodies set up by School Heads merely to fulfill a formal requirement. The number of active SDMCs has risen from 106 to 160 in just 6 months. Results will improve still more in the coming months when everyone recognize the value of parent participation.

>> Children's school attendance has shot up due to constant vigil and monitoring. While only 46 schools had an acceptable attendance of over 90%, there are now 56 schools. Drop out rates have fallen dramatically. Where only 63% of school-age children were in school in 2001-02, the figure now stands at 79%.

>> Though we haven't yet achieved good Results with regard to government school Teacher attendance, trends are that this too will improve.

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E. RANGE OF EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES IN GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS INCREASED & IMPLEMENTED

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RESULTS (as on 31 Dec 2004)

Monitored this Effect	183 Villages (81%)
Successes	306 Schools from 181 Villages
Partial Successes	8 Schools from 8 Villages
Failures	22 Schools from 22 Villages

In spite of pressure, support and sincere efforts, Balakendra Teachers and Mahila Meetings could not achieve as much as they would have like to, with regard to government school functioning. Results for this Effects Indicator are less dramatic.

>> At the start of this Programme, 144 of the 288 government schools had play time of one period per day. There are now 169.

>> 132 schools had a debate period conducted once a week. There are now 137.

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F. CHILDREN RETAINED IN GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

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RESULTS (as on 31 Dec 2004)

Monitored this Effect 23 Villages (10%)

Successes 5 Children from 5 Villages

Partial Successes 16 Children from 8 Villages; 1 Village

Failures 4 Children from 2 Villages

Attitudinal Problems 7 CSUs

This Effects indicator once again measures outputs that are directly under the control of secondary stakeholders of the VASS Programme. As a result, Results are really dramatic.

We obtained primary data only from 10% of the programme villages. Balakendra Teachers were confused since many Sub Effects appeared to be a repetition of earlier indicators (A.1. to A.4.). However, we obtained reliable secondary data from our computerised database to commute the first Result.

>> General girl-child schooling (as different from drop-out at puberty) has shown a dramatic improvement. In 2001-02 only 60% of school-age girls were in school. The figure now stands at 75%.

>> As mentioned earlier, our response to Physically Challenged children has been rather ad hoc.

>> It is possible that, due to a continuous and every day attention to children and their schooling in such a wide geographic area, rent seeking by government school Teachers has been brought to a total halt. But we cannot definitely say so till all the programme villages are monitored.

>> The government itself was at fault for a 7 month delay in supplying books and clothes. So very few children were punished for failing to bring books to school.

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G. INDIVIDUALITY AND SELF ASSERTION IMPROVED IN COOLIE CHILDREN

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RESULTS (as on 31 Dec 2004)

Monitored this Effect 66 Villages (29%)

Successes 1 Case from 1 Village; 76 Events from 65 Villages

Since the VASS Programme is only 6 months old and there have been no Board examinations, we cannot communicate any concrete Results on this indicator. Once again, only 29% of programme villages have been monitored.

>> But it is painfully apparent that there has not been sufficient child focus in these 226 village to even consider the possibility that children could display leadership qualities, take initiatives to find solutions, etc.

>> Balakendra Teachers and Case Workers have made a small start by encouraging children to hold camps for community service and contribution

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H. COOLIE CHILDREN LEARN TO LEARN AT BALAKENDRA CENTRES THROUGH CREATIVE APPROACHES

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RESULTS (as on 31 Dec 2004)

Monitored this Effect	203 Villages (89%)
Successes	173 Children from 69 Villages; 185 Balakendras from 185 Villages; 188 Villages
Failures	2 Balakendras from 2 Villages; 11 Villages
Attitudinal Problems	8 Balakendra Teachers from 7 Villages

There already was a fair amount of extra curricular activities in the self-financed children's activity even before the start of the VASS Programme. This has been tremendously strengthened. 71 villages are now rated as Very Good and 117 as Good. 184 Balakendras have every day play built into their daily schedule. The number of children participating in taluk level sports competitions has increased from 53 to 159 in just 6 months. The number in district and state level competitions has gone up from 5 to 14.

The self financed children's activity had hardly any creative learning in it. Now with the VASS Programme, we see a dramatic improvement

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I. HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF CHILDREN ASSURED

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RESULTS (as on 31 Dec 2004)

Monitored this Effect	60 Villages (26%)
Successes	23 Children from 18 Villages
Failures	48 Children from 28 Villages
Attitudinal Problems	20 CSUs

The Coolie Sangha has had a long tradition of caring for the weak and hungry. But, quite inexplicably, nothing much has been done these past 6 months even after identifying 39 children who went to school hungry. Perhaps because they felt that the one solid meal they received at school was enough. Perhaps because 4 years of continuous drought had eroded their collective capacity to empathise. Or, more probably, perhaps because a general and overall attention to all children (with the setting up of the VASS Programme) had drowned the voices of the weak and stragglers. Case Workers confirm this seeping apathy when they say that 20 village CSUs have a serious attitude problem and don't seem to care...

The start of annual health check-ups of all children has been a huge step. Thousands were examined and hundreds got follow-up treatment.

Our Public Health Nurse was on leave and could not participate in this Effects Monitoring exercise and her records were not analysed to glean learning. Only 29% of Balakendra Teachers monitored this Effect, and they were not able to reflect Results fully and properly.

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Column View