Students managed libraries

Gujarat CSR Authority

Project Profile - Student managed libraries in primary schools

Background & Rationale

Gujarat has made rapid strides in the field of education especially in rural areas in the last few years through various government initiatives. It has ensured that infrastructure for schools is in place across all its villages, and has managed to significantly improve school enrolment and reduce drop-out rates.

However, the Pratham study for Gujarat has revealed that 'though school enrolment is up to 95% in rural Gujarat, learning levels remain at concerningly low levels. Almost 55% of rural students in Standard V cannot read a Standard II-level text, and almost 65% of these students cannot do simple subtraction. Visits to rural schools during the *Gunotsav* and other programmes show that a large number of them, do, in fact, have well-stocked libraries. Under the **Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan programme** of the government, the schools are given adequate annual grants to buy books for their libraries. However, **most of these libraries remain unused by children** as the schools have procured **books which are not suited to the relevant age group** and are poorly produced. While procuring library books, the wishes of the children are never considered and the books are usually kept locked and inaccessible. Further, the collection of books that are housed in the libraries is often not appealing to children. This leads to the situation of rural children not reading these books.

Education in India's villages needs to go beyond the narrow focus of academics. The schools and other educational institutions should help the children mature into strong adults and should provide a window to the outside world. The general knowledge of children is so poor that they do not know the immediate history or current affairs of their own country. They live cocooned away from the rest of the society, and there is no system within our education to set this right. The issue is further exacerbated due to the primary school teachers not taking adequate interest in imparting proper language skills among their students, leading to a latent but pressing **need to inculcate the habit of self-reading** among young students through interesting and child friendly books.

Objectives of the project

Project aims at creating access to vernacular libraries in rural Gujarat, with an intent to improve the **reading skills** and **general knowledge** of **rural children** by providing access to child-friendly books in govt. run primary **school libraries**.

Expected Benefits

The support provided by companies would result in tangible and intangible benefits for Sponsor Company as outlined below:

Tangible Benefits	Intangibles
❖ Community support & appreciation ❖ Social license to operate, through cooperative community engagement	❖ Enhanced reputation by way of supporting projects benefitting communities at the 'bottom of the pyramid' ❖ Social branding ❖ Enhanced credibility within community and sector

Tangible Benefits	Intangibles
❖ High levels of employee satisfaction through their participation in social responsibility projects ❖ Recognition through awards and appreciation	❖ Contribute towards national and state goals aligned with Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme and Gujarat State Nutrition Mission

Opportunities for CSR intervention

Throughout the world the Library of a school is considered as part and parcel of the academic set-up. It is created and maintained to serve and support the educational activities of the school. The recommendations of numerous commissions and committees established by the Government of India and various other states for the improvement of school education can bring in desired results provided the school has the full complement of library resources, personnel, and necessary infrastructure.

A school library provides information, inculcates ideas, and develops knowledge that is so essential to functioning successfully in today's information and knowledge based society. Through this CSR project, endeavour is to help the school library in achieving the educational objectives. If we recognize the value and importance of informal system of education, then library method of self-education is sure to get its due place.

The Project aims to support school libraries in order to equip students with lifelong learning skills and develop in them creative thinking and imagination. The project intents to make libraries hub of all the activities planned and executed in school. Libraries can then be accordingly used by students to prepare for their next class period, home examinations, competitions, recreation and inspiration. To cater to the wide varieties of demands of students and teachers it is also important to judiciously select and procure the prescribed/recommended text-books and other reading material from different sources, technically process it by making use of a standard scheme of classification, catalogue it to provide various access points, organise the collection on scientific lines, circulate the documents and disseminate the information in the manner most liked by the students and teachers.

Potential project area

Potential project areas are rural pockets across Gujarat (taluka wise). Government primary schools in rural areas will be targeted. Clusters of 100 schools each will be identified.

Target group

The project is aimed at covering all the rural children who do not have access to libraries and / or books of their interest. Target population covers rural children aged 5-18 years primarily from weaker section of the society.
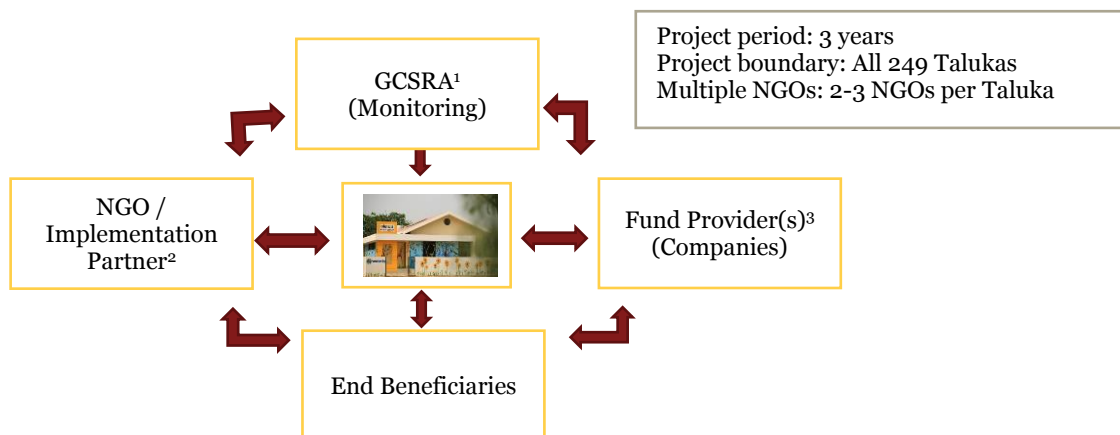
Implementation plan

The detailed implementation plan for the Project is provided below

A.   Implementation

The Project shall be implemented by GCSRA as a monitoring agency, with support from NGOs and corporates. The project aims to cover all 249 Talukas and hence multiple NGOs (on-ground project implementing partners) shall be identified. The project would be implemented for a minimum period of three years.

Figure 1: Implementation model

Project period: 3 years
Project boundary: All 249 Talukas
Multiple NGOs: 2-3 NGOs per Taluka

[1] GCSRA will act as monitoring partner for the project. GCSRA will channelize the fund to implementing agency
[2] Implementation partner will be an NGO having expertise in implementing education focused projects.
[3] Fund Provider(s) are the companies undertaking projects in partnership with GCSRA and responsible for timely disbursement of CSR funds.

The project will focus on providing quality facilities in the school libraries and addressing the reading needs of rural children from 5-18 years. Accordingly, under this model:

- The private partner (funder / corporate) finances project facilities (infrastructure, if required) and services (e.g. books, tables, chairs, cupboards if required etc.)
- The space for infrastructure (if required) would be provided by the Panchayat. The ownership of the assets at the end of the agreement period is usually transferred to the Panchayat. The panchayat uses these facilities and services for running the libraries in the village.
- The NGO will ensure proper maintenance of the facilities. These support facilities and services are bundled along with trainings for librarians and field staff on running various child reading skills and general knowledge needs. NGO (project implementing partner) will also ensure that the library is spacious with separate boys and girls bathrooms, drinking water facility, ventilation, natural light and security. The NGO will try to mobilize current government infrastructure and resources to improve the reading skills of children in libraries.

Once the NGO (implementation partner) is identified a tripartite contractual agreement(s) will be signed between all three parties (GCSRA, Corporate and NGO).

Process of implementation:

1. The project aims to establish one full-functioning library in every primary school. Whether or not the space / infrastructure of the library is inadequate or needs to be extended, will be decided in consultation with panchayat(s), village heads and school principals and teachers. The NGO partner will map government run primary schools across all 249 talukas in 33 districts. The schools will be segregated based on whether a particular school has an existing library or not.

2. Following key aspects shall be addressed through this project -

- **Selection of books:** A list of good quality books, in various languages, preferred by students will be prepared by taking a group of students to various book shops and book fairs and negotiations will be held with their publishers for offering reasonable prices for their bulk purchase.
  - **Library:** The books provided to the school library could be of a wide variety to appeal to all children – the genre can range from educational, literature, general knowledge or even comics. A small cup board and an issue register will be sufficient to start first of its kind 'students managed library' on experimental basis.
  - **Sensitisation on reading skills and general knowledge:** Monthly sensitization workshops for children on the importance of reading skills shall be conducted with the involvement of school teachers.

3. A cluster of 100 primary schools could be funded by the interested company.

4. A group of **four field workers** could be engaged to manage the **cluster of 100 primary schools**. These field workers would be responsible for
   - training the students in management and issue of books
   - ensuring that child-friendly books are selected for each library in consultation with the school children
   - replacement of damaged books at the end of every year
   - ensuring that the library is used by children
   - conducting at least two language tests in each school to assess the improvement in the language skills of the students
   - monitoring children's performance through a specially designed App
   - uploading performance data on a dedicated project website

5. For management of each library, a **committee of children** would be appointed in each school to manage the library. This committee would be trained by field workers in the daily business of running a library such as maintaining a register, overseeing the borrowing and return of books, categorising the books, etc. Some examples of tasks that can be assigned to student librarians / committee members are:
   - processing of books– covering, labelling, stamping
   - circulation of books – issues, returns, reservations
   - shelving – returning items to the shelves and ensuring all shelved items are in correct location and sequence
   - creating displays – assisting with creating imaginative displays to promote the collection or events
   - assisting library staff with daily operations, besides helping other students and staff to access and use resources.

6. Review of number of books issued in individual schools during the month and use of books per student, along with the status of the libraries and the language related progress of every student will be monitored through a specially designed App. Information so compiled will be uploaded on a website.

7. Funds to be channelized by GCSRA
   - Cost associated with the infrastructure support
   - Cost associated with the support services
   - Fee associated to running the project with the support of implementation partner (NGO)
   - Fee associated with the monitoring of the project by GCSRA

Table 1: Step By Step Implementation Plan

	Implementation Plan	Roles & Responsibility
Identification of Villages and schools	Identification of govt. run primary schools located in rural areas	GCSRA in consultation with partner NGO
Identification of Beneficiaries	Identification of beneficiaries and developing demographic profile of the beneficiary (Children between 5-18 years)	NGO
Stakeholder Engagement	Identify key project stakeholders and create stakeholder engagement plan	NGO in consultation with GCSRA
Implementation Structure	▪ Dedicated team by GCSRA to manage and monitor the programme ▪ Corporate CSR funds will be channelized through GCSRA ▪ Local NGO partners to help in project implementation, including, but not restricted to conducting sensitization training at schools, training field workers and maintenance of the libraries.	GCSRA and partner NGO
Monitoring and Tracking	▪ Financial monitoring ➢ Annual Plan ➢ Donor Fund management system ➢ Monitoring Report ▪ Identify KPIs (Key performance indicators) for the programme ➢ Improvement in the overall learning environment ▪ Fund utilization report from the NGOs ➢ Mechanisms to measure / report progress and utilization of funds	GCSRA, NGO & Funding Company
Impact Assessment	▪ Impact assessment of the programme to identify gaps and positive outcome	GCSRA

Gujarat Alkalies and Chemicals Limited, Vadodara has already initiated a similar programme on the concept of students managed libraries in some of the Government run Primary Schools, wherein they are providing 15-20 tablet computers with internet connectivity and good quality books in Gujarati language. The students get the books or tablets issued for one or two days and are allowed to take them home. The initial response of this experiment has been encouraging. GCSRA intends to scale up the learnings of this initiative.

The GCSRA can be approached for further details and assistance for developing the Students Managed Library Project. GCSRA can also provide support, on charge basis, for development of a project report, execution level support and monitoring.   This initiative can be implemented either directly by the Sponsoring Company, in consultation with the local schools or through GCSRA. In case, a Company wants to implement it through GCSRA, the Authority will provide help in selecting an implementing partner, procurement of books, training and monitoring. For supervision of the entire project, Authority will charge 4% of the project cost.

List of success indicators

Project Outputs
- Number of libraries and schools supported (from baseline levels) over project period in the state and districts
- Increase in usage of libraries by the beneficiaries with specific focus on female children over project period (from baseline levels)
- Increase in number of beneficiaries / children who visits libraries

Desired Outcomes
- Increased knowledge (IQ) level of children
- Improved communication skills among children
- Development of students' ownership of the library

Potential impacts
- Improved reading habits in children ensuring knowledge base expansion for future exam preparations / advanced study opportunities
- Improved leadership qualities, due to children managing the functions of a library

B.   Implementing agency

The Project shall be implemented by GCSRA as an oversight & monitoring agency, with support from NGO/Implementing agency (having expertise in education sector within rural communities) being tasked with the responsibility of grass root implementation. The GCSRA/implementing agency shall work in collaboration with Corporates.

C.   Partnerships

Roles and responsibilities:

a. **GCSRA**: Will provide CSR project monitoring support. Its role shall include, inter alia, conducting baseline surveys, preparing strategic plan for the project, coordinating between donors, technical service providers, project level monitoring & evaluation, documentation and reporting (physical/financial), facilitating the issuance of compliance certificate for the project activities.
b. **NGO**: Will provide technical and execution support towards on ground project activities. Implementation support and training of the field workers, librarians, maintenance of the libraries, reporting of CSR activities under the project.
c. **Corporates**: funding the initiative and timely disbursements of funds.

D.   Anticipated benefits from the project

- **Improvement in reading habits among children in rural Gujarat:** Library books that are of good quality and of interest to **children** will be available to rural schools. Having access to quality and appealing books will help instil the life-long habit of reading and self-learning.
- **Increase in proficiency in Gujarati:** The library books will be in the local vernacular language, and will facilitate proficiency in Gujarati among **school children.**
- **Improvement in general knowledge and appreciation for literature:** The books will expand the world-view of the children and take them beyond life within their villages. Books will also help them to cultivate an interest in literature and language. Both these aspects are key preparation for adult life, when as adults, they will be required to know about the world and communicate effectively in the workplace.
- Key benefits of having **student managed library** are **:**
   - have students' inputs in selection of books
   - develop student's ownership of the library
   - develop students' skills in helping others to use the library

Workplan

#	Activity Description	Y1, Q1	Y1, Q2	Y1, Q3	Y1, Q4	Y2, Q1	Y2, Q2	Y2, Q3	Y2, Q4	Y3, Q1	Y3, Q2	Y3, Q3	Y3, Q4
1	Situational assessment of the project villages and mapping of govt. primary schools (developing a baseline)	▓											
2	Entry point interventions - Community sensitization and school mobilisation (including children committee formation)		▓	▓	▓								
3	Creation of a cadre of field workers/ library champions		▓	▓	▓	▓							
4	Developing the results framework				▓	▓	▓						
5	Execution of defined project activities by NGO(s)						▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓
6	Project Monitoring & Evaluation by GCSRA			▓							▓		▓
7	Reporting		▓	▓	▓		▓		▓		▓		▓
8	Impact Assessment			▓	▓			▓	▓			▓	▓

Estimated Financial Costs

The estimated financial costs for 100 schools (100 libraries) with support from 4 field workers from NGO partner is provided below. The costs also include 4% administration costs to be paid to GCSRA as an overall agency for monitoring and managing the project. The estimated financial costs per taluka can be calculated considering -

The cost for this initiative will consist of
   (a) selection of books
   (b) enrolment of Government and private schools (mobilization)
   (c) setting up the libraries
   (d) training of Field workers cum trainers
   (e) management of libraries and periodic replacement of books
   (f) Monitoring, evaluation and documentation
   (g) Programme management (NGO cost)

Major expenses during various years will be as follows-
Year 1:
   1. Library books worth Rs. 10,000 per school;
   2. Cost of one cupboard per school for the first year of the project to store the books;
   3. Salary to four field workers to manage a cluster of 100 schools; and
   4. Language tests of students and their certification.
   5. Miscellaneous cost (tables, chairs etc. if required)

Year 2 & 3:
   1. Salary to four field workers to manage a cluster of 100 schools; and
   2. Augmentation of books and replacement of damaged books in each school.

3. Language tests of students and their certification.

Table 2: Estimated Costing

	Activity	Units	Unit cost	Year-1	Year-2	Year-3
Students Managed Library Project						
COST ESTIMATES OF PROJECT FOR 100 SCHOOLS FOR 3 YEARS						
1	Books	20,000[1]	200[2]	40,00,000		
2	Books- Augmentation & replacement	10,000[3]	200		20,00,000	20,00,000
3	Cup board	100	2,500	2,50,000		
4	Salary of Field worker cum trainer (FW&T)	4	8,000	24,000	24,000	24,000
5	Travel & communication grant to FW&T	4	2,000	8,000	8,000	8,000
6	Cost of mobile	4	4,000	12,000		
7	Development & maintenance of App & website	1	2,00,000	2,00,000	1,00,000	1,00,000
8	Training for field workers	3[4]	5,000	15,000	15,000	15,000
9	Sensitization workshops for children	3[5]	5,000	15,000	15,000	15,000
10	Testing of students and certification	100	25,000	25,00,000	25,00,000	25,00,000
	Total			70,24,000	46,62,000	46,62,000
A	Contingencies	5%		3,51,200	2,33,100	2,33,100
B	GCSRA Administration cost	4%		2,80,960	1,86,480	1,86,480
C	**Total cost**			7,656,160	5,081,580	5,081,580
	Grand Total	**1,78,19,320**				

Monitoring

- GCSRA will act as the monitoring agency for the CSR project implementation and ensure compliance as per requirements, and shall issue CSR compliance certificate to company against the investment made
- Based upon the perceived progress of the year, GCSRA will provide support to the company to develop a success framework, under which, performance indicators shall be defined and the baseline levels as well as targets defined over a 2-3 year horizon, on an annual basis.
- Once defined, the targets can then be broken down into half-yearly input-output-outcome targets, with impact criteria defined over 2 years on the reading skills and general knowledge level of the children post the project implementation.
- GCSR team will supervise periodic monitoring of the project, whereas NGO will collect data and provide progress reporting as per the results framework. Besides periodic monitoring, GCSRA will also conduct evaluation and impact assessment of the projects

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[1] *200 books in each school. Hence, 200 x 100 books total during first year.*

[2] *Average cost of a book*

[3] *100 books in each school. Hence, 100 x 100 books total next two years.*

[4] *Training to field staff once in four months*

[5] *Sensitization workshops once in four months*

Reporting

The implementing agency would be responsible for the following:
- ensure regular monitoring and follow up and updation of records in the database and generate progress reports for GCSRA and company as per agreed timelines
- ensure reporting on CSR activities to GCSRA on monthly, quarterly and annual basis as against the funds disbursed to them

GCSRA would be responsible for reporting on the overall CSR activity management and annual compliance and issue a compliance certificate on the same to the company.