



AN APPROACH TOWARDS REINFORCING EDUCATION



OF DEPRIVED CHILDREN IN KOLKATA



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AWC	Anganwadi Centre
AWW	Anganwadi Worker
CINI	Child in Need Institute
DI	In-depth Interviews
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
ICDS	Integrated Child Development Services
IEC	Information, Education and Communication
KMC	Kolkata Municipal Corporation
MO	Medical Officer
NCERT	National Council of Educational Research and Training
NCLP	National Child Labour Project
NGO	Non-governmental Organizations
OBC	Other Backward Classes
OOSC	Out of School Children
PS	Police Station
RTE	Right to Education
SC	Schedule Caste
TLM	Teaching Learning Materials
WHO	World Health Organization
WLCPC	Ward Level Child Protection Committee

PROGRAMME BACKGROUND

The project “An approach towards reinforcing education of deprived children in Kolkata” is a three-year project which has been implemented in Kolkata since the year 2017. The education programme of CINI complements government efforts to control the ever-increasing magnitude of child labour. enrolment and retention of all children in the age group of 6-14 years in formal schools from disadvantaged background.

The programme has been addressing different stakeholders as secondary audience and children who are the direct audience of the intervention. Apart from children, their immediate family or parents are also covered through the programme. The support teaching staff or the community volunteers have been instrumental in running the centres which are providing support for the child’s educational development. In line with the different target groups covered during the intervention, the study participants are the following,

- (i) Primary audience: Student/children, parents, support teaching staff
- (ii) Secondary audience: community leaders, school teachers, ICDS workers, Montessori teaching staff

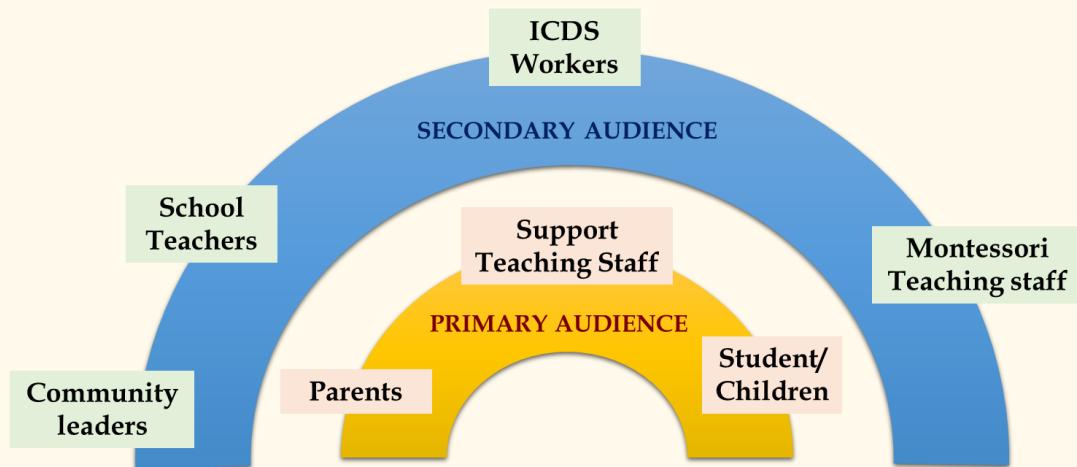


Figure 1: Programme Audience

Apart from education, the project targets overall development of the children through life skill trainings, counseling, creativity classes, physical exercises, trainings on child rights and child protection issues. The project also focuses on family strengthening approach.

Parents have been mobilized and formed into groups to address local problems and to ensure education and protection rights of their children and that of the communities.

Schools are also of another focus of the project, as they are the main government service providers of education. Strong school community linkage is being established through regular school visits, meetings, and school-based camps.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

STUDY OBJECTIVE

The programme has completed eighteen months (mid-term) of its operation in October 2018. The mid-term programme evaluation was conducted to assess the impact of the project as well as to identify the vulnerabilities in the project location. Analysis of stakeholder also forms a vital part of the impact assessment to identify the gaps in knowledge, attitude and practice of the stakeholders with regard to education.

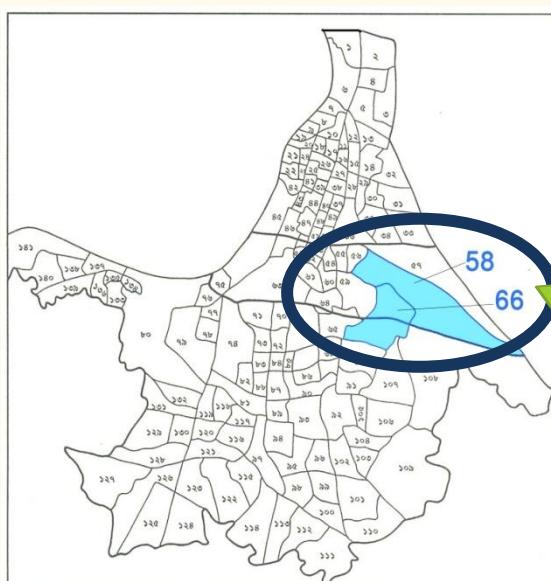
The broad objectives of the research were:

- i) To assess the impact of the project as well as to identify the vulnerabilities in the project location
- ii) Stakeholder analysis or impact assessment at different levels

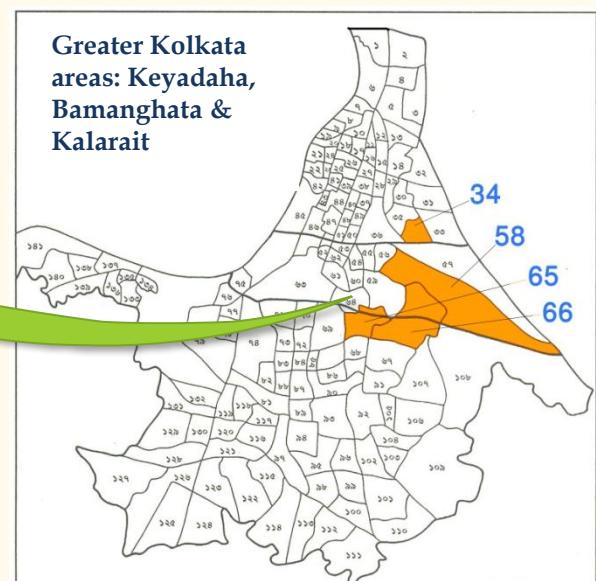
COVERAGE

The programme was conducted in 4 wards of Kolkata Municipal Corporation (34, 58, 65 & 66) in Kolkata and two more areas from greater Kolkata, namely, Kalarait, Bamanghata and Keyadaha.

During the mid-term evaluation, two wards were purposively randomly – the chosen wards were number 58 and 66, owing to presence of majority of centres covered in the programme implementation. The two wards give representative scenario of the impact of the programme implementation across locations. The two wards are also the top most populous wards in KMC areas.



Wards covered for mid-term evaluation

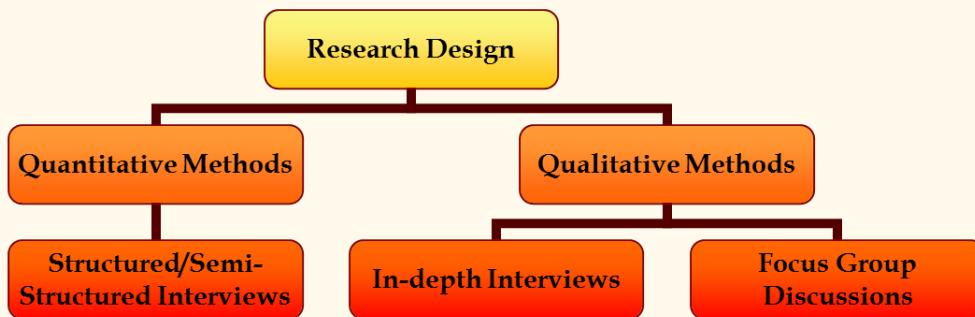


CINI Intervention areas

Figure 2: Program and Research Coverage

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Mix of Qualitative and Quantitative methods of data collection were used for the evaluation of the implementation programme.



- i. **Quantitative data** collection was done among children covered through the programme and compared with children not covered under the programme to assess the difference in academic aptitude levels.

Further to assess the extent of vulnerabilities in terms of presence of child labour, incidence of school dropout house to house data on children was collected.

- ii. **Qualitative data** was collected among children to understand various dynamics with regards to gender equity in education, child's agency to choose and develop a plan for future and other developmental outcomes.

Among important stakeholders such as parents, school teachers, community volunteers – qualitative evaluation was undertaken to understand the impact of the programme on them.

- iii. **Facility Survey** of education institutes was conducted in the two wards of Kolkata Municipal Corporation namely, 58 and 66 to understand the availability of educational institutes.

Group - 2
Shop Owner

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১৮

He perdió su trabajo y se quedó sin hogar.

১০২ প্রক্রিয়া করে আবার পুনরাবৃত্তি হওয়া সম্ভব।

५८

Shop Our new

$$\text{Group} = 6$$

Education is vital both for economic growth of a nation, as well as for allowing individual citizens to benefit from this growth through improved employment outcomes. In developing countries, the challenge starts with the availability of proper facilities and properly trained human resources in the supply side. Many times, even though the facilities are available, there are barriers to availing the education system due to various economic conditions which needs to be addressed through inducing policies and incentives which can reduce the opportunity cost of attaining education. Lastly, the social conditions and norms in the form of gender inequality or ignorance about child entitlements within the community, limit the process of child development through education.

With the ultimate aim for child development through improved quality of student learning, the drivers for change of CINI's programme implementation can be broadly categorized as (i) supply side capability interventions by providing physical and human resources and learning materials; (ii) advocating and enhancing utilization of policies and schemes that incentivize education related behaviour among deprived sections; and (iii) improved community participation interventions through parent involvement in child's education and development.

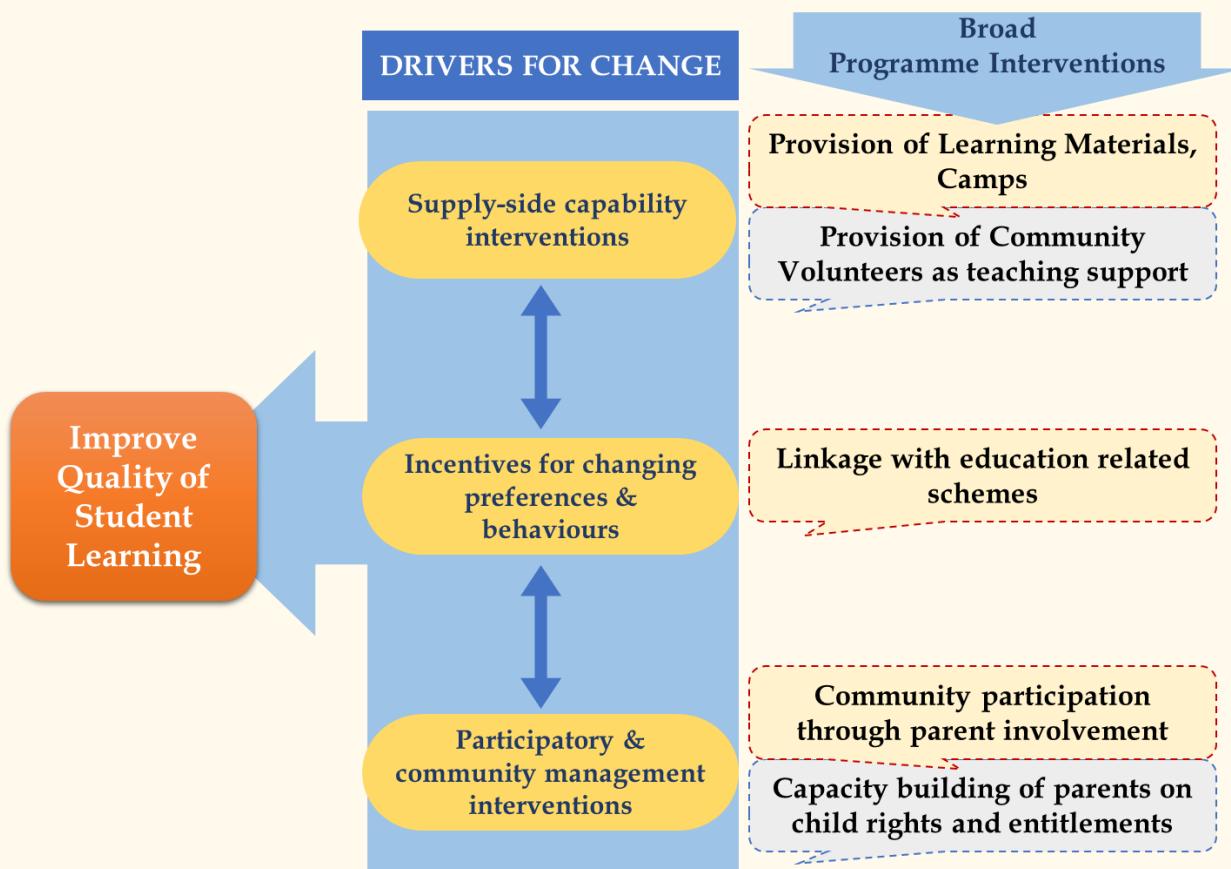


Figure 3: Process of Change through Programme Interventions

CINI has the mechanism of monitoring the indicators on quarterly basis to check the process of improvement on continuous basis.



Creating reliable resources within the community providing teaching support

Community volunteers are identified within the community with the objective of better relatability and understanding of the local education needs. The volunteers receive offsite and onsite training support from CINI to understand the issues of the children in a better way and to perform their teaching duties properly.

Parents acknowledge the contribution of community volunteers (mostly referred as *centre teacher*) in keeping vigil on their wards' regularity in school going – “*if the child does not go to school the teacher calls over phone or comes to visit our home and check the reason for absence in school*”. The volunteers also are seen as a connecting link with the school as parents feel more comfortable contacting centre teacher to know about exams or child's learning update in school.

Acceptance of the community volunteers among children is also evident as they affirm the behaviour of centre teacher as '*more friendly and approachable*'. Their teaching methods are also found more interesting and helpful in understanding. The regular and rigorous practice of syllabus is found more '*complete and comprehensive*' compared to syllabus coverage in school classroom teaching. The volunteers often serve as confidante for the adolescents as they feel comfortable sharing their dreams and problems in day to day life.



Figure 4: CINI Centre Teachers

RENT - GROUP TRAINING, MEETING & WORKSHOP

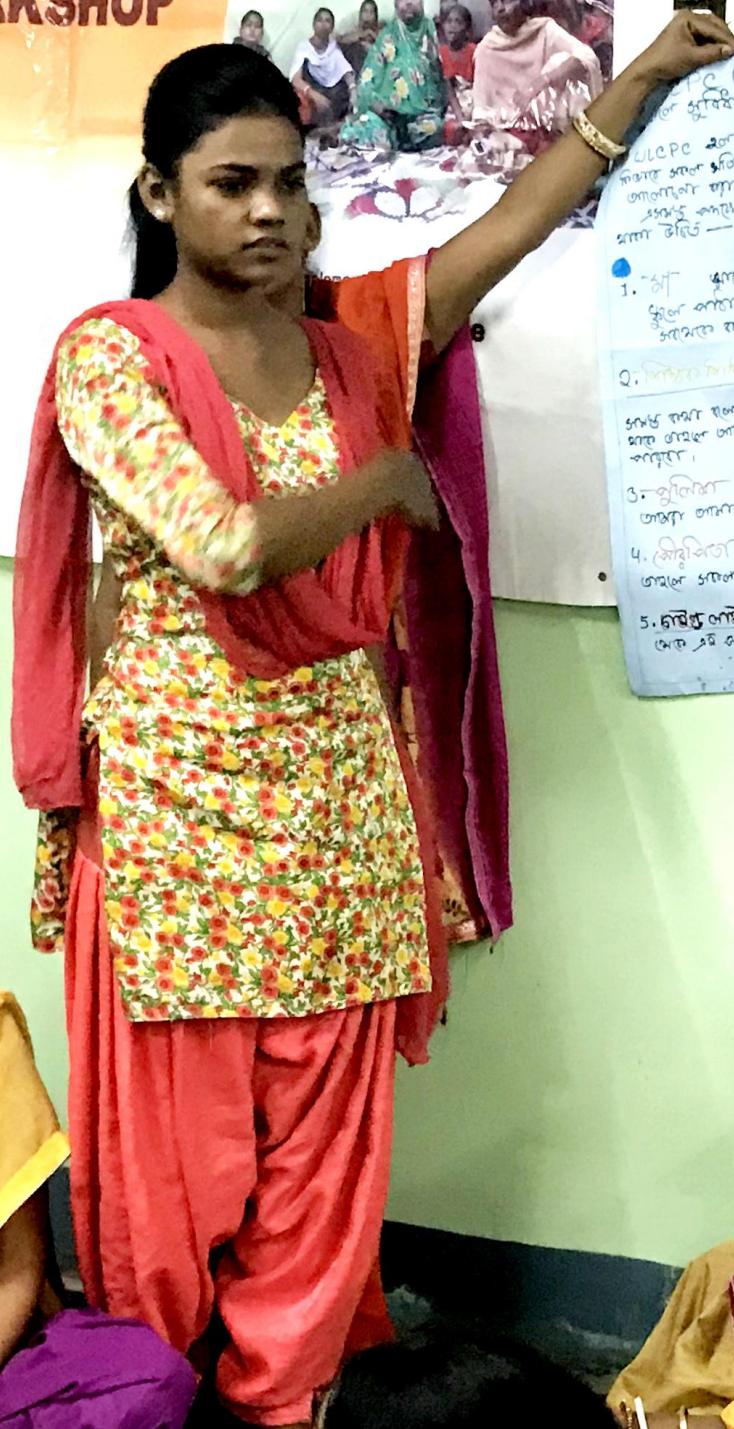
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ULCPC - २७ वर्षांची ग्रुप वित्ती विकास
मित्र संस्था याचे योगदान आणि उत्तराधिकारी
मित्र संस्था याचे योगदान आणि उत्तराधिकारी असल्याचे अनुभव आणि उत्तराधिकारी असल्याचे अनुभव आणि उत्तराधिकारी असल्याचे अनुभव —

१. श्री अमृतेश बाबू विद्युत विकास आणि उत्तराधिकारी असल्याचे अनुभव

२. विजय विठ्ठल विद्युत विकास आणि उत्तराधिकारी असल्याचे अनुभव

३. श्रीलक्ष्मी विद्युत विकास आणि उत्तराधिकारी असल्याचे अनुभव

४. श्रीविजय विद्युत विकास आणि उत्तराधिकारी असल्याचे अनुभव

५. श्रीराम विद्युत विकास आणि उत्तराधिकारी असल्याचे अनुभव



Innovative Teaching Methods for Improving Student Learning

The use of innovative and interactive learning and monitoring materials during class interactions and has resulted in improved student learning.

Micro innovations for better learning experience among students – community volunteers at different centres use various innovative techniques to address the issues among students in the respective centre.

- ❖ Use of technology or visual methods for better retention among students - “*When I teach history, I try to show them videos on my phone. One such example is when I was teaching the students about French revolution, I showed them a video, it helped children to retain the details better than others*”- Mobile Teacher at ward 66
- ❖ Since the students come from varied background and community, some students find it difficult to cope – one of the barriers to understanding is difference in teaching language and language spoken at home as several non-Bengali or Hindi speaking children study in Bengali medium Government institutions - “*Since many of the students speak in Hindi at home in my area, they have a tendency to speak in Hindi during classes too, however since they are studying in Bengali medium schools they also need to speak in Bengali. Therefore, during my class- I ask the students to talk to me in Bengali while I talk to them in Hindi so both will learn*”
- ❖ Making learning simpler by using interactive methods – “*I have taught tables of simple numbers by playing a game in the class where, the children sit in a circle and clap. For example, if I am teaching table of 2, the 2nd and 4th and 6th student will clap.... and so on. This made the lesson easier and more engaging for the students*”

Improved and innovative monitoring techniques and tools are also used by the volunteer teachers to track the attendance of students attending the centre. The visual techniques are easy to understand and user-friendly for educationally weaker communities to adopt and replicate.

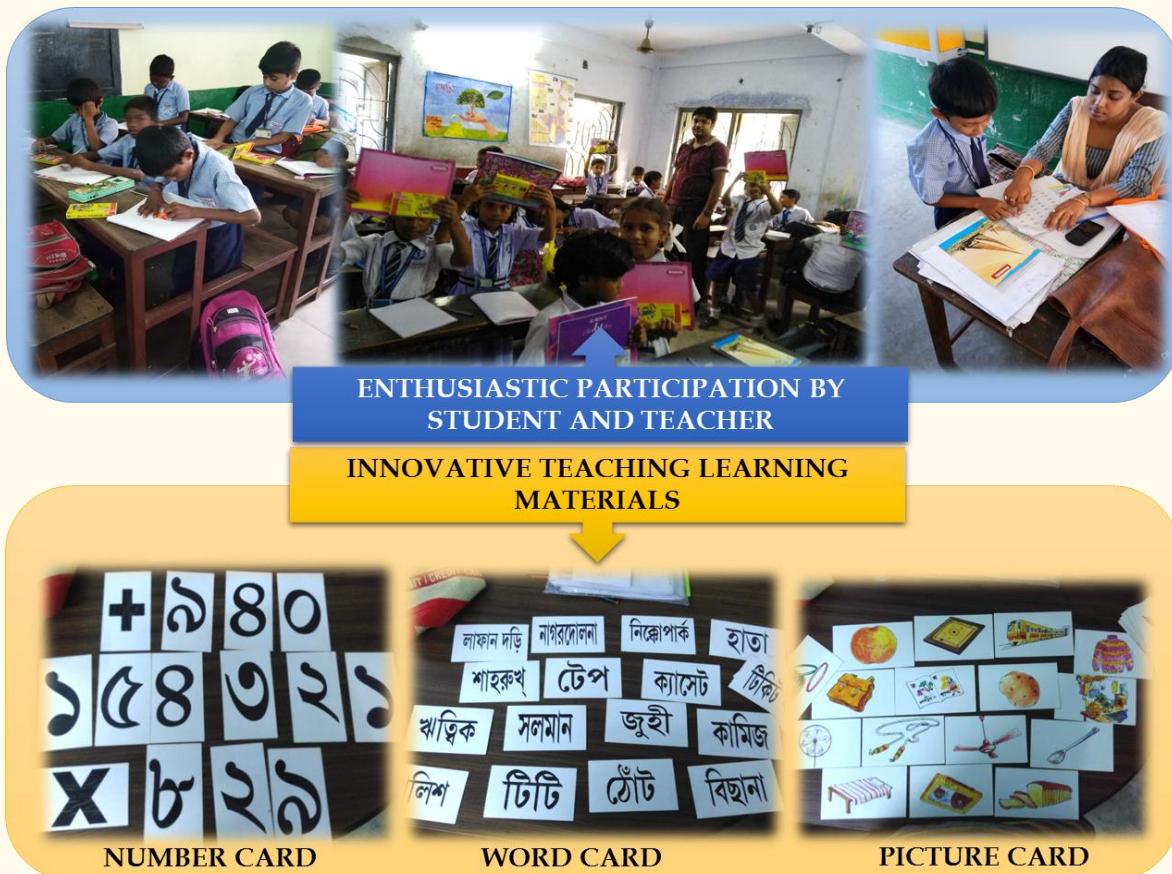
STUDENT ATTENDANCE CHART				
CENTRE NAME: GABtala Nabin				
NAME OF THE STUDENT				
1. Nabiul Islam				
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
2. Md. Sajid	3. Md. Sajid	4. Md. Sajid	5. Md. Sajid	6. Md. Sajid
7. Md. Sajid	8. Md. Sajid	9. Md. Sajid	10. Md. Sajid	11. Md. Sajid
12. Md. Sajid	13. Md. Sajid	14. Md. Sajid	15. Md. Sajid	16. Md. Sajid
17. Md. Sajid	18. Md. Sajid	19. Md. Sajid	20. Md. Sajid	21. Md. Sajid
22. Md. Sajid	23. Md. Sajid	24. Md. Sajid	25. Md. Sajid	26. Md. Sajid
27. Md. Sajid				
Routine of Class				
MONDAY	BEN	MIS		
TUESDAY	KALI	GEO		
WEDNESDAY	MATH	SCIENCE		
THURSDAY	MIS	CHEM		

Fig 5: Student Attendance Tracking at different Centres



Educational Camps to bridge the gap in learning level

Some students especially from disadvantaged background, at times fall behind rest of the batch of students in terms of reading and writing competencies. It becomes pertinent to bridge this gap among such students, so as to keep them within the education system, as many times this leads to lack of interest for continuation of education and subsequently dropout. CINI's **Educational Camps** are such an innovative technique to bridge the learning gap with the aim to move majority of students up to the highest ability group by the end of the intervention so that they are able to read basic texts with proper understanding, have confidence to do basic arithmetic operations and are able to express themselves effectively both orally and in writing.



The **Educational Camps** focus in grouping of children at the learning level rather than by grade. Innovative teaching methods and Teaching Learning Materials (TLM) are used, for each group and by utilizing a combination of activities among children especially in the initial growing age studying in between Grade 2 to Grade 4. Reading-writing skill of all children were bridged up with continuous assessment process and further interventions.

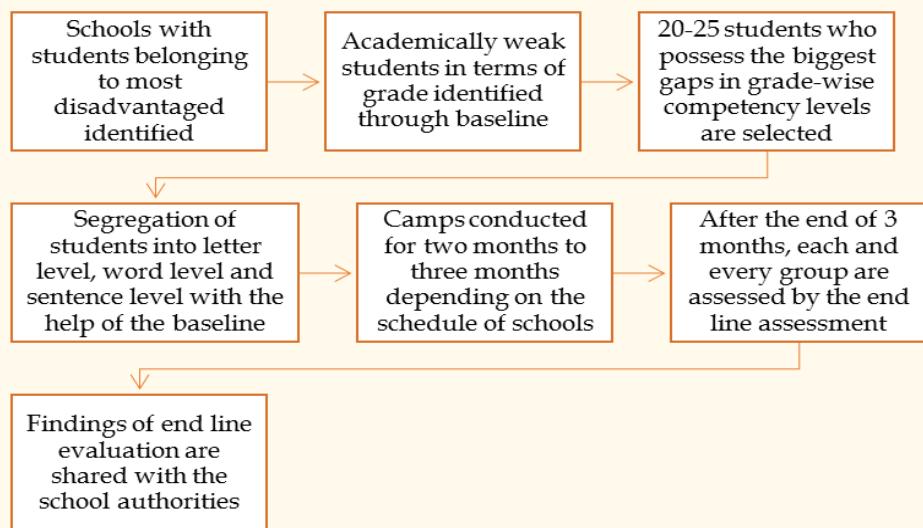
CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF SCHOOLS:

Schools are selected for conducting camps on the basis of the following criteria:

- 1) Schools with at least 90% children from disadvantaged community
- 2) Majority of the children studying in these schools are first generation learners.
- 3) The student of these schools is either engaged as child labour or partial labour.
- 4) The level of the students is academically weak according to the grade as well as age.
- 5) Majority of the students have their mother tongue Urdu and faces huge problem in coping up with the syllabus in Bengali.

PROCESS OF CONDUCTING CAMPS

The camps are conducted as a 72 hours package from alphabet level to paragraph level among the children to bridge up the reading and writing skills in language group.



RESOURCES USED

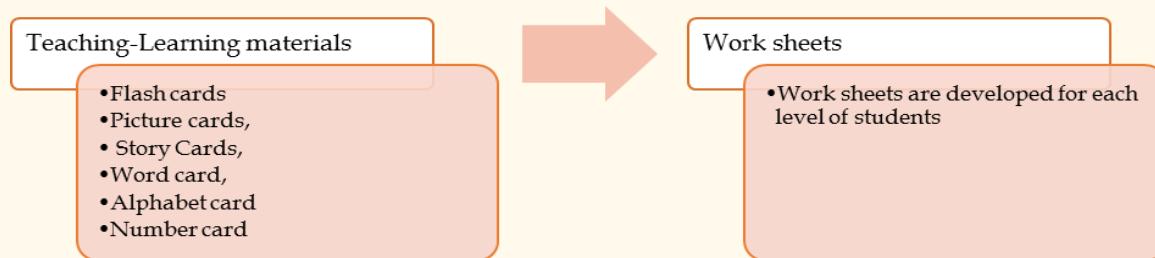


Figure 6: Process & Resources of Conducting Educational Camps

SUCCESS ACHIEVED

The educational camps were conducted in 12 different primary schools namely- Deshbandhu main, Sarat Chandra Sur, Purbanchal Prabhati Sangha, Beleghata Shanti Sangha for Boys, Tarun Tirtha, Jib Shiva Mission, Rabindranath Vidyabhavan, Panchkari Radharani Adarsha Vidyalaya and Pally Unnayan Prathamik Vidyalaya. In total, 237 students were exposed to the intervention across the above-mentioned schools in two phases. Success was achieved in all camps as there was **Intra-Level Improvement¹** among 11.9% of the students and 68.2% **Inter-Level² Improvement**. While 13.9% of the students showed same level of aptitude even after the intervention. The camps also had a positive impact in reducing absenteeism among students as 12.6% absent during baseline went down to 3.3% during end line.

School authorities have formally acknowledged the contribution of CINI in *helping to ensure advancement and growth of education among children* in their school. The methods and tools have been found *useful and scientifically constructed which enhanced the competency level of the slow learners as well as fulfilled the learning gaps of students*. The school has also shown interest in adopting the Innovative Teaching Learning Materials in their institution³.

¹ Within same level improvement

² Improvement by jump in level

³ Source: Certificate of appreciation awarded to CINI by Head Master of Sarat Chandra Sur Institution (Primary), Pottery road, Kolkata

Parent's Groups - Building Synergy among Community towards Education of Children

Parents are one of the most important stakeholders in any education-based project as they directly influence the child. Through this project, CINI was able to sensitize parents and generate awareness on education, protection, gender issues of children. Increased awareness further motivated parents to understand their children better. Awareness among parents about **effective parenting, child rights, right to education, child protection and gender issues** resulted in a more enabling environment for the child's development.

Some of the milestones is making the community more focused towards child development related issues were the following,

- Creating leaders in community to promote advocacy of child rights: through a cascading effect, parents of children were sensitized as active parents' group who take part in the process of advocating child rights. **PRERNA**, meaning inspiration, is the name of one such core group of parents, consisting of active and interested potential leaders among all parents in the Parent Group, they act as representatives of the rest of the parents.

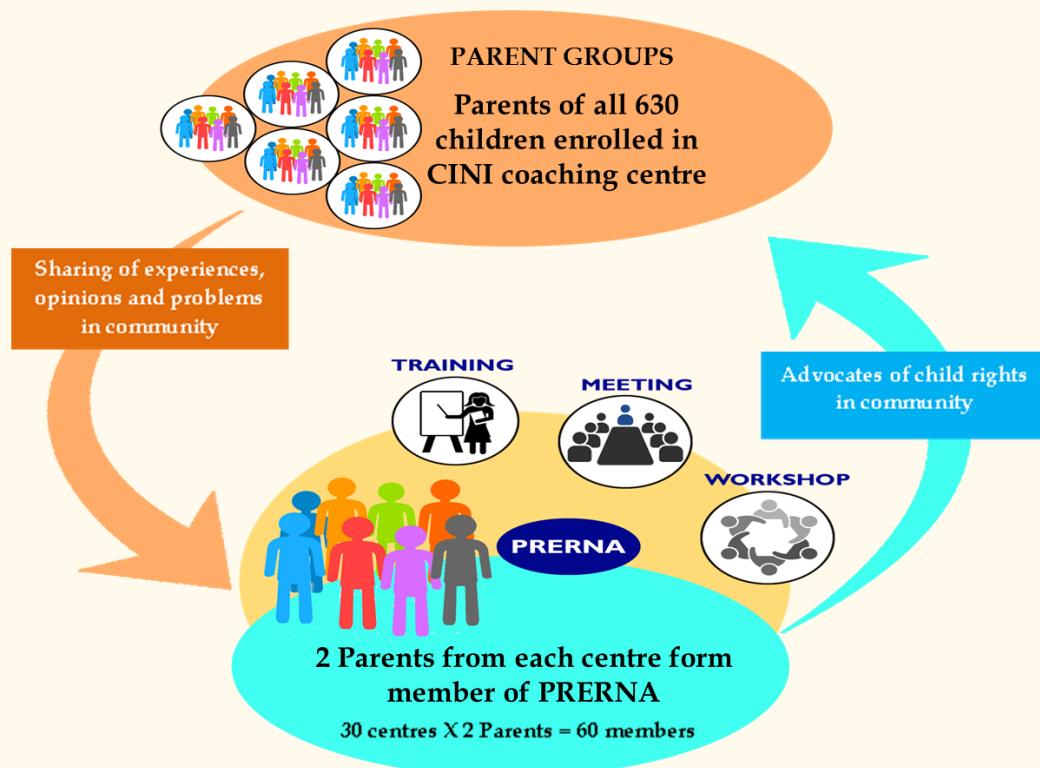


Figure 7: Community mobilization among Parent's groups

- Improved Community Participation through dialogue and advocacy among stakeholders on child related issues

With exposure to the training and interactions – there is increased awareness about child rights – *'keep an eye on own as well as neighbourhood children and immediately raise alarm if child is not going to school'*. In case of incidence of early marriage or school dropout there is intervention by parents to resist the occurrence of such incidents.

Due to sensitization about various schemes and services for children, there is increase in tendency to avail such schemes as well as inform peer parents in similar condition to access the same. Thus, improving the demand for services and schemes among the intended audience - *"in Kalarait centre some parents were not interested to send their children in the centres*

despite the need for back up educational support, so the parents group in Kalarait took the initiative to motivate those parents in the community and send their children to the coaching centre of CINI"- as mentioned by a CINI staff

Discussion on pertinent issues such as child protection or early marriage or enrolment drive contribute towards a more enabling environment for child growth and development. Parents identify and discuss cases in their locality which can impact children in the area and together take decision or steps to address them.

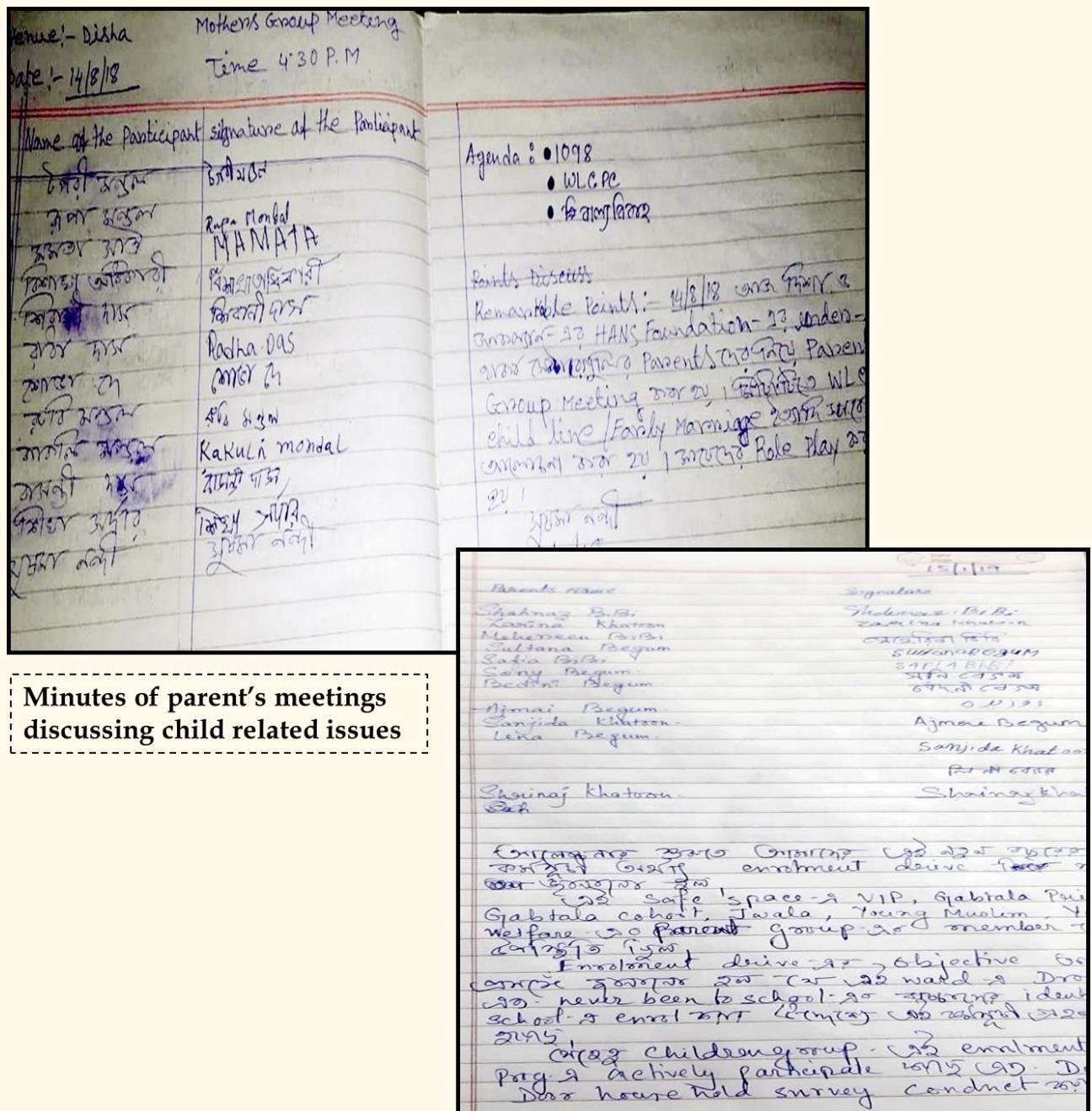


Figure 8: Sample Minutes of Parents' Meetings

✚ Strengthen community structures – Child Protection Committees

With the help of CINI the Ward Level Child Protection Committee (WLCPC) has been formalized in ward number 58 with participation by Councilor of the ward, Block President, Sub Inspector of Pragati Maidan Police station (P.S) and Tangra P.S, Local club members, Headmaster of Janakalyan School, ICDS Supervisor, Representative of CINI, Representative of both parent group and children group, Representative from DAS NGO, Medical Officer

(MO) from ward 58 and ICDS Workers. Eventually the committee is functioning on its own as out of the five meetings between September 2018 and January 2019, two meetings were help with the initiative of CINI and rest three meetings by the initiative of the councilor of the ward.

Along with problem sharing and discussion on responsibility of committee members, emphasis was given on enrolment drive for continuum of education among children. Plan was also developed for the upcoming quarter with clear responsibilities for each stakeholder.

With the facilitation and continuous endeavour of CINI, the members of local (Muslim) club have come forward to contribute towards education among children in the locality. Parents are encouraged to send their children without any fear to the after school centres. Yearly award ceremonies are organized to encourage children to continue study and motivate to excel. The club also play important role in stopping child marriages or children dropping out of school.

Through all its initiative and achievements, CINI has been able to develop a sustainable impact among the community that can continue its own momentum.



Improved Involvement in Child Upbringing among Parents

Due to difficult living conditions, daily struggles of making ends meet and social deprivation due to inability to perform for being unskilled and illiterate - many times the parents of children from difficult background are indifferent and negligent towards their children's development needs. As a result, basic necessities such as education, nutrition or hygiene do not get much focus in the child's upbringing. Rather there is pressure on the child to earn and contribute towards the family income, doing household chores and managing younger siblings in the absence of mother or any adult member.

Through **regular sensitization meetings and trainings** on child related issues, the parents have become more aware of the immediate needs of the children. More and more illiterate parents acknowledge the need to become literate to earn a decent livelihood later in life.

Mother of four daughters admits that she did not take the right decision by not stopping her two elder daughters in getting married at tender age of less than 18 years; but now she is taking care of her younger daughters so that they continue studies and become empowered before getting married - *the elder two daughters did not take interest in studies and got married with groom of their choice, we did not say anything and agreed to their decision...but now want the younger ones to study. The third daughter is doing good in studies after coming to CINI centre and getting the guidance of centre teachers.*



Mothers in the parents' group acknowledge that *responsibility of child's studies is not just of the teacher, as parents we also have our duty. We have to keep an eye on the child while he or she is studying. Have to be caring during their exams. Have to provide the right nutrition and emotional support during exams. After coming to CINI meetings we have realized many things which were not possible sitting at home. Now we are aware and cautious towards our children.*

Parents also talk about child protection issues such as kidnapping, child trafficking or early marriage. Parents acknowledge the need to know self-defense skills such as karate training.

Sensitivity towards child emotions and psychology is getting acknowledged by parents – *only scolding is not going to work, as parents we need to talk and understand the mental state and give them support.*

The exposure and participation in the parent's group is also seen as an outlet for self-expression for the mothers. They recognize the benefits of networking with other parents – *the friendship and bonding with other mothers and CINI madam gives us confidence in standing beside our children and becoming better parents.*



Figure 9: Impact on Child Upbringing

This initiative has two-fold benefit as on one hand it is successful in creating an enabling and positive setting for children which shall lead to happy and healthy child development. On the other hand, it is giving a more positive and satisfying sense of parenting among the parents of children.



In order to further improve the efficiency and efficacy of the supply side of education system the following can be looked at,

- ⊕ Till now, the school teachers and management has been supportive in providing space and also identifying weaker students who need supportive teaching – however, there is need to be cautious, as it should not be seen as passing of responsibilities.
- ⊕ There is scope to sensitize the teaching fraternity through trainings, workshops, sharing of best practices in other schools or schools in other states
- ⊕ Explore scope to incentivize teachers to improve their teaching techniques and developing a child friendly and child centered manner of teaching – competitions and awards for teaching innovations, teacher exchange programmes or other such encouraging activities
- ⊕ Along with using interactive and child friendly techniques of teaching, the practice of repeated revision among students is also quite prominent – there is need to ensuring that learning shift from rote methods
- ⊕ Scope to check and implement other established courses or activities to improve learning skills within the schooling system – for example digital language courses or tools to enhance analytical skills, mental arithmetic or Abacus, creativity development workshops, book reading sessions, life-skill trainings etc. – explore possibilities of collaboration with such area experts and develop child's ability to learn beyond books and syllabus
- ⊕ Among children from deprived and economically weaker sections, the opportunity cost of education is perceived higher as the returns of investing on education are not clear to them – along with academics there is need to focus on skill development through relevant vocational courses

In India the RTE Act among other norms in Section 29 states the following:

- Learning through activities, discovery and exploration in a child friendly and child-centered manner
- Medium of instructions shall, as far as practicable be in child's mother tongue
- Making the child free of fear, trauma and anxiety and helping the child to express freely
- Comprehensive and continuous evaluation of child's undertaking of knowledge and his or her ability to apply the same

Advocacy towards initiation and improvement in such areas can be looked at within the education system.

For further improvement in participative and community engagement in education – the structures and committees such as school management committee, child protection committee should be strengthened further by regularizing its functioning – a particular day of the month can be assigned for such engagement.



DETAILED FINDINGS OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

VULNERABILITY OF CHILDREN IN THE LOCALITY

A typical household in the locality: Shabnam⁴ lives in a “raihat⁵” on the second floor of a multistory building which runs a factory in the ground floor. She stays with her three sons in her brother house. Her elder son who is fifteen years old and works in a ‘chappal’ manufacturing factory, he is the sole earner for her mother sons’ family. She was thrown out of her own house along with her sons by her husband, five years back as he got married to another woman. Being compelled to live at her parents’ place, which is currently in the name of her unmarried brother, she is living in fear of being thrown out again when her brother gets married. Her middle son, who is thirteen years old, is an eager learner but is unable to enter formal schooling as he lost couple of years due to lack of age and identity proof documents, which were unjustly not handed over by the father of the child. Now after several fights she has acquired the documents, but the discontinuity in schooling and gap in learning is stopping him from entering formal schooling; currently he is undergoing Arabic education provided for free by a philanthropist in the area. Shabnam has managed to put her youngest son, eight-year-old, in the local government sponsored Bengali medium school, but he is also undergoing the pressure of performing. She is unable to provide him much educational support or send him for tuitions as he refuses to go in fear of getting beaten by the teacher for poor performance.



This is a typical situation of a common woman living in the slums where CINI is working towards reinforcing education among deprived children. The CINI volunteers have identified the children and also trying their best to mainstream Shabnam’s middle son to formal schooling. They have also informed Shabnam about their centre in the locality, where educational support is provided at a minimal charge. The eldest son has exceeded the schooling age and seems impossible to be brought back to schooling or education.

This gives a clear understanding of the vulnerabilities among the children living in the area. Along with **weak economic conditions**, which is further perpetuated by lack of proper education leading to lack of respectful and satisfying job prospects, making many trapped in the vicious circle of poverty. Many of the children belong to families with **uneducated parents**

⁴ Name changed to avoid disclosure of identity

⁵ Small room of about 10 feet by 5 feet dimension, on rent for a minimal amount, serves as bedroom as well as kitchen for families with low income; toilet facility is common for several such raiyat dwellers in the building

and themselves being **first generation learners**. The **pressure of earning** and contributing towards the survival of the family is high among many, which also is keeping them away from mainstream schooling and education. Even among those children who are school going, often there is **lack of enough educational support or absence of a conducive learning method** which is detrimental to the continuation of education. **Lack of awareness about vocational skill building facilities** is also keeping those involved in labour away from technical skill development.

Apart from these, overall development conditions are also not very favourable due to unhygienic living conditions, crowded living conditions with high number of family members in a small living area, exposure to domestic violence, absence of positive environment due to lack of loving and caring atmosphere both at home and school or workplace, limited positive parental guidance – which create further hindrances in promoting values and attitudes of responsible citizenship and in nurturing creative and emotional development.

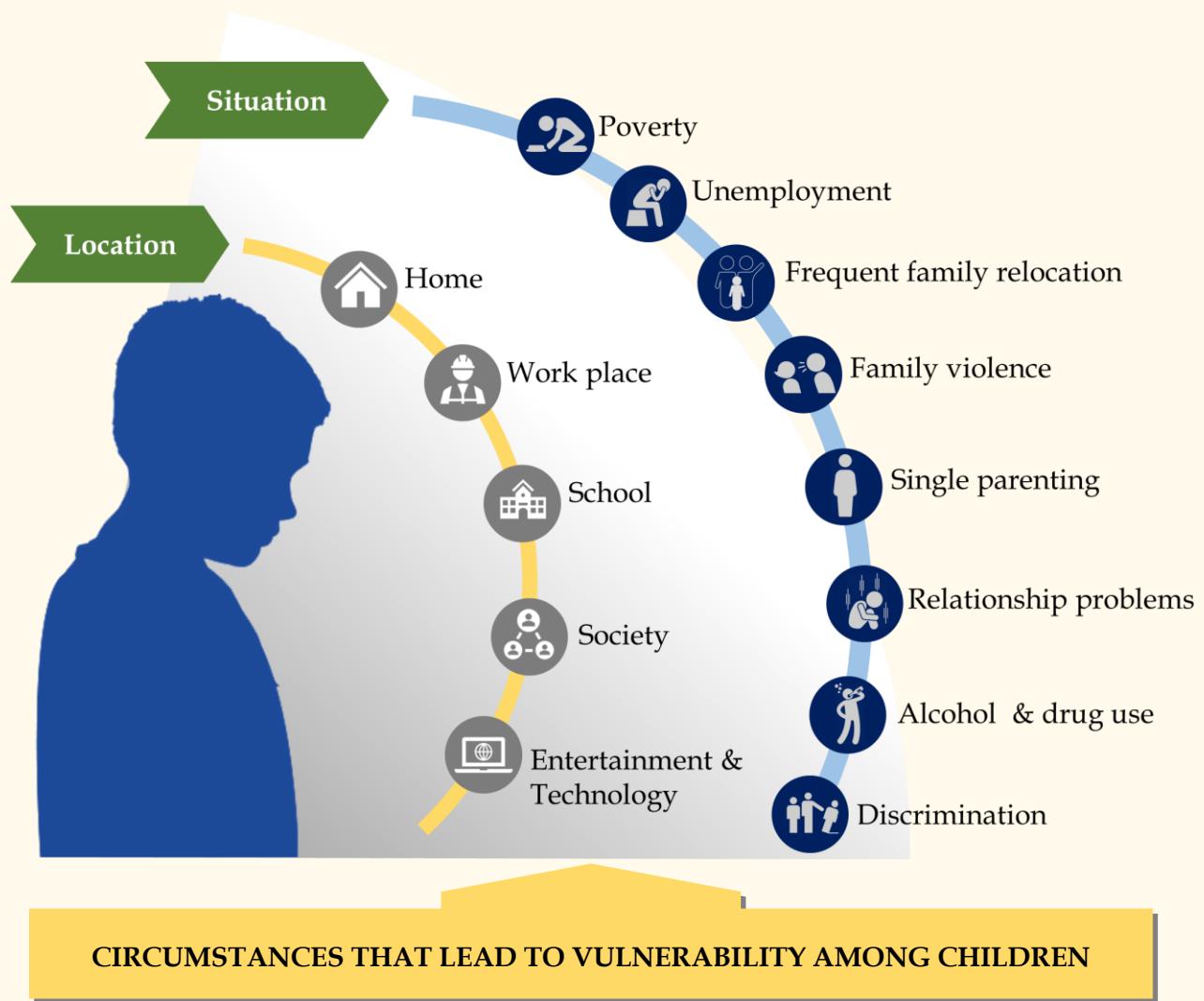


Figure 10: Vulnerability among Children

While economic situations such as poverty, unemployment or frequent relocation due to no permanent place of stay are the more common reasons for vulnerability among children living in slums, instability within family in terms of family violence, single parenting or relationship problems, substance misuse among family members also adversely affect the child development. Discrimination is another social malice which hinders the child from having a happy and healthy childhood. Discrimination maybe not be always apparent like in case of

those with any physical disability, but silently affect a child in the form of being type casted as a weak or poor performing student in class. There is need to bring more focus on the situations and issues at all the locations where a child can be vulnerable. With the advancement of digital technology and higher exposure to the same, there is need to keep vigil on the extent of involvement and also avoid situations that can cause any harm to the child due to negative influence through those sources.

Family characteristics: Looking at the profile of the children covered in the area during the survey gives an understanding of the family characteristics and the extent of vulnerability among them. While in case of family dynamics there is no precise statistical data, however, mention of discord or violence is common among children in these locales.

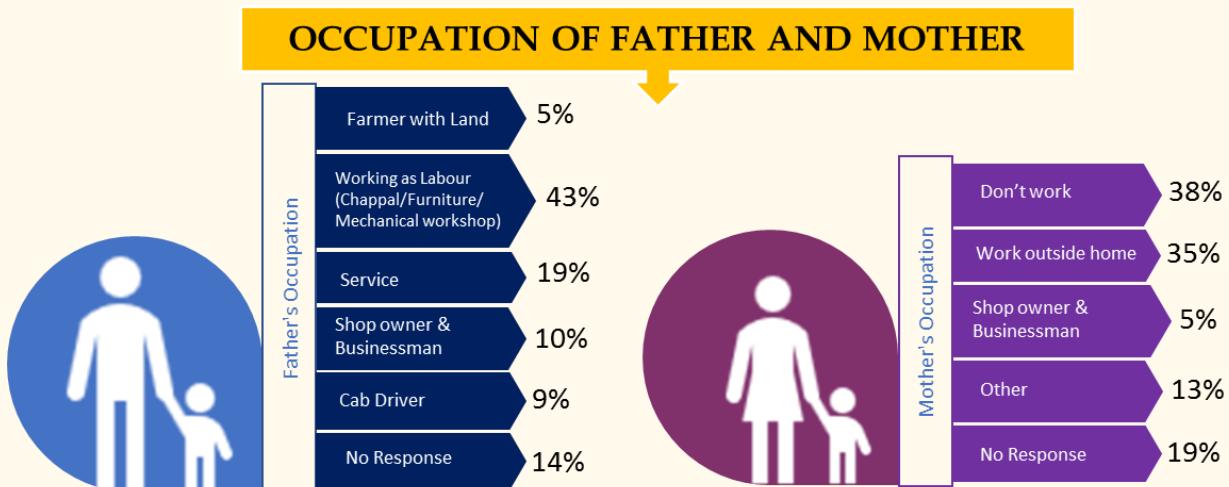
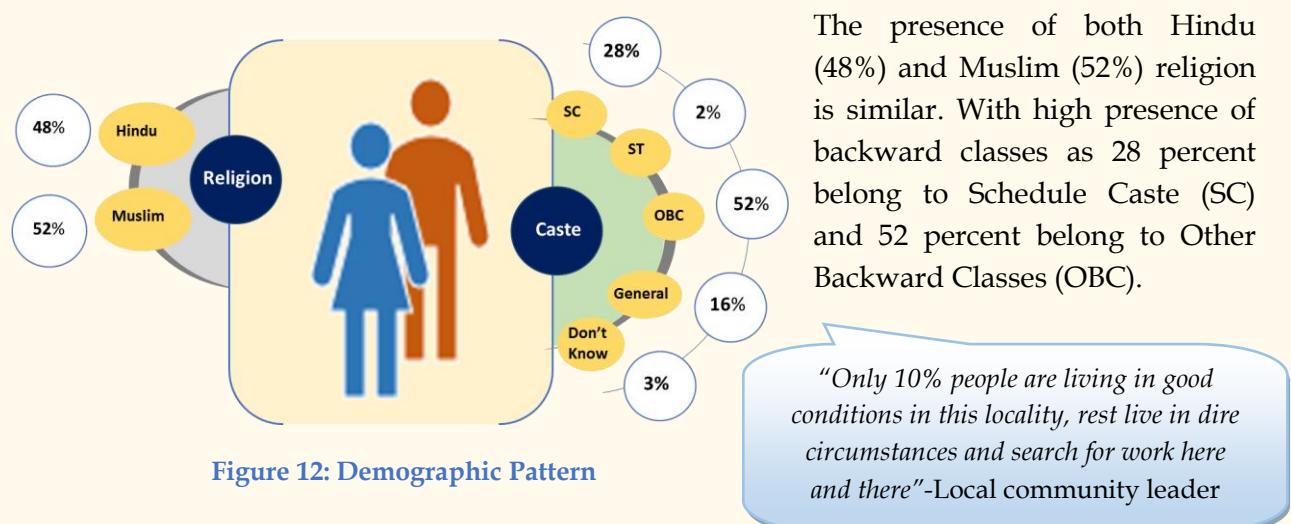


Figure 11: Occupational Pattern among Parents

The households are characterized by low income mostly linked to lack of regular work involvement by the parents of the child. Among the children covered during the study in the slum area, it was found majority of the fathers work as casual labour. While 38 percent of the children reported their mothers do not work outside home, around 35 percent reported mothers working outside. While a working mother can contribute towards the family income and economic condition, it also poses a risk of the child being alone without parental supervision for a considerable time of the day.



Across the world it has been found that poverty denies children the chance to learn. How much a child learns is strongly influenced by the inherited disadvantage that comes with poverty and extreme inequality⁶. In most cases, the poor is unable to make it to the end of primary education.

Lack of education among parents: many of the children are first time learners with no or limited educational support within family. Due to lack of enough support from family or parents, there is high practice of “after school tuitions” – which adds to the burden of cost of education. As a result, inability to afford high tuition fees lead to discontinuation of education for many children.

“cost of tuition fees is very high for us to afford, for upper class above 8th standard, the tuition fee is around Rs.500 to Rs.600, whereas, for lower classes for all subjects, have to pay Rs.200-300 for two or three days a week tuition”- parent of adolescent

“most of the parents in this area are like me - illiterate and working as domestic workers, so we do not get time to look after our children’ studies. I am not capable of helping them if they come across any problem, in such cases, tuitions become important to continue education”- parent of adolescent

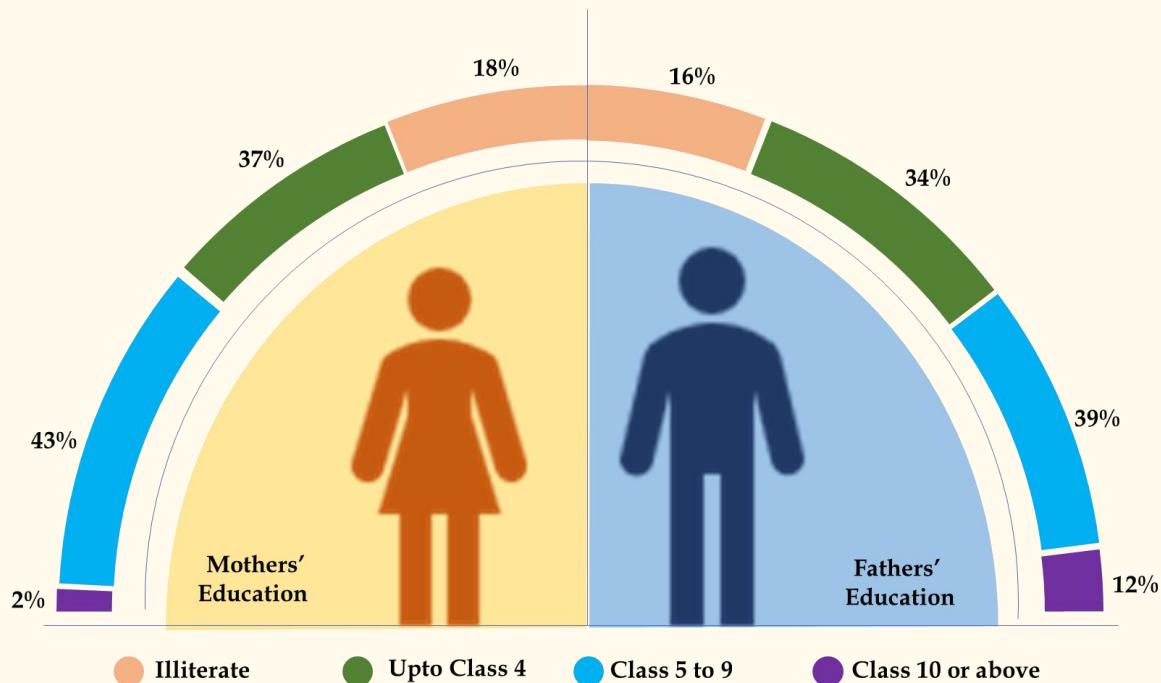


Figure 13: Education among Parents of Adolescents

The studying environment is often lacking at the household, due to lack of literacy among parents they are also unable to get involved. Due to lack of perceived value of education, there is not enough encouragement or motivation provided from the household towards school going or continuing education. Absenteeism due to lack of parental supervision is common among children belonging to such households, which directly impact performance in class and further adding to lack of interest in continuing studies.

⁶ EFA Global monitoring report, 2014

Substance misuse within family: there was hesitation among the children to admit the extent of substance misuse within the family. As reported, 45 percent of the children mentioned someone in the household consumer Guthka or Cigarette and 41 percent mentioned consumption of alcohol. In majority of the cases, the father is involved in such practices. Several studies indicate that if the parent smokes, then there is higher tendency among the children to smoke during adolescence. Smoking within the household is further harmful as it not just affects the smoker but also family members who inhale the smoke as a passive smoker.

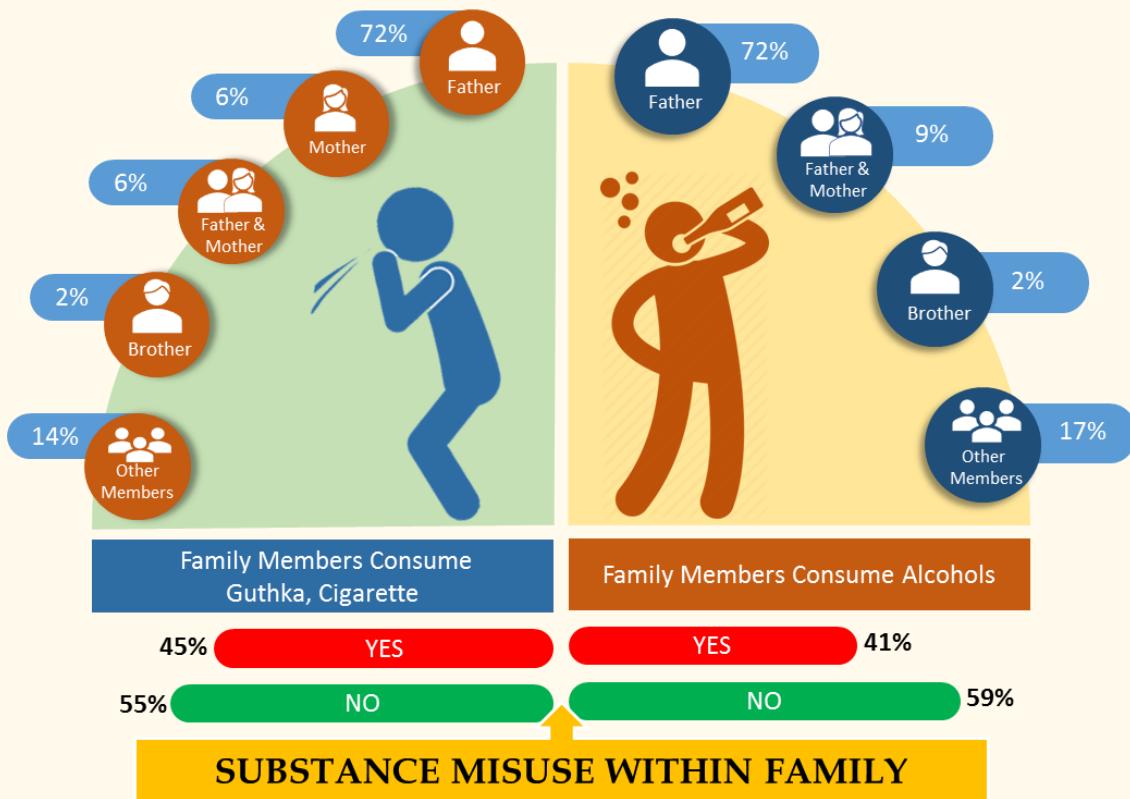


Figure 14: Extent of Substance Misuse within Household

Gender discrimination continues to prevail within household: apparently there is no reporting of discrimination or severe practices against girl child and both genders mentioned that at home they are encouraged to continue studies. However, when we look at the time spent at home after school, it is indirectly evident that girls end up spending more time on household errands as compared to boys. Among the school goers, after school there is need to help in household errands - while 93% of the girls are engaged in some activity after school, 70% of the boys reported the same.

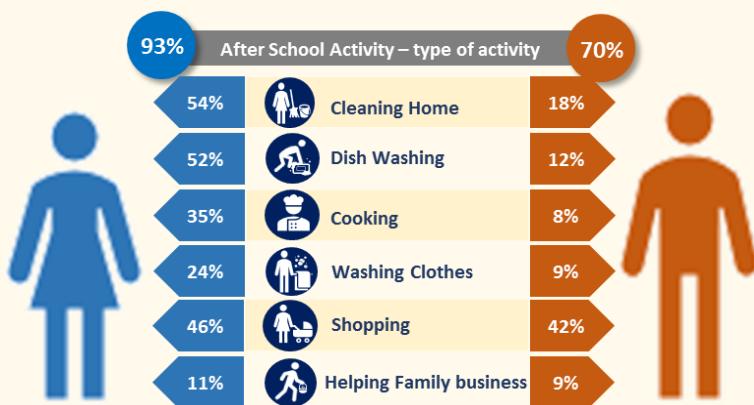


Figure 15: Household work by Gender

Also, looking further at the type of household activity conducted, there is clear difference across boys and girls and gender stereotypes continue to exist. Higher proportion of girls reportedly undertake household work such as 'cleaning home', 'dish washing', 'cooking' or 'washing clothes'; whereas in case of boys their

engagement in household work is mostly in the form of 'doing shopping'. By the type of household work, it is clear that the girl child continues to spend considerable time daily in performing household work, which takes away time from studying at home.

Children engaged in labour: considering the economic condition in the area, there is a considerable chunk of children who are out of school and engaged in income generating activities. From the household survey conducted, out of 9550 children, 1229 children were found out of school and out of them, 26.5 percent reportedly are engaged as labour. While 13.8 percent mentioned paid labour, 12.7 percent are engaged in unpaid labour, supporting family work.

"there are several chappal factories in this area, children work there. Many works as food delivery person also. Rest goes to school." - local community leader

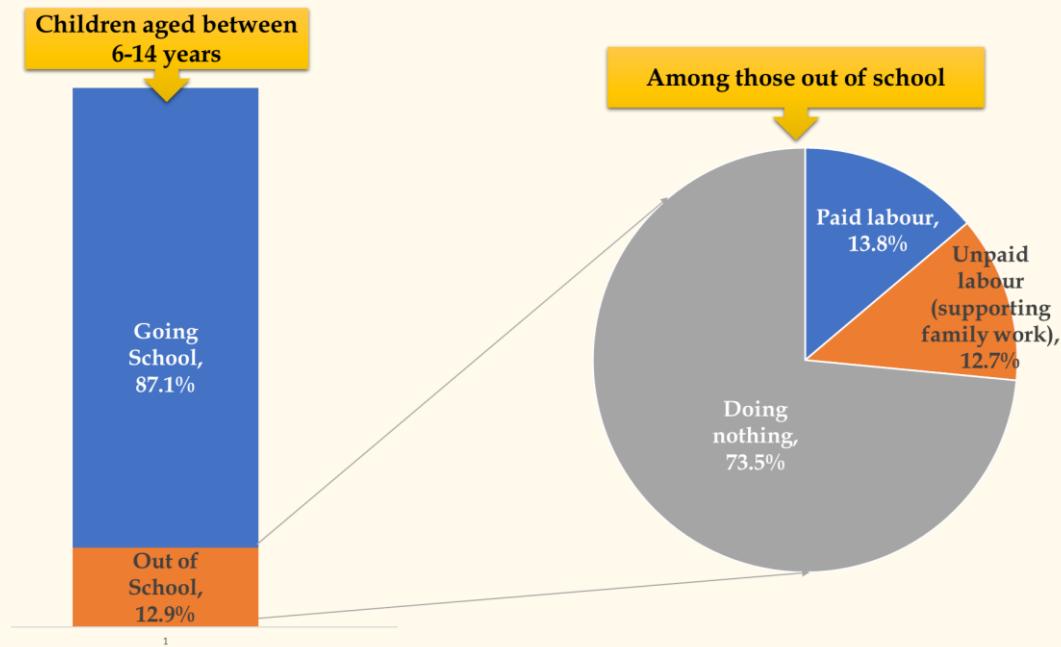


Figure 16: School going status among children & Engagement among those Out of School

The future is a facet we all aim to secure, protect and enhance. But the children, our collective future, are susceptible to various dangers. This vulnerability is twofold- first, an innate susceptibility owing to the inherent characteristic of a child, which must be appropriately nurtured for growth and second, an applied susceptibility exposed on a child through negligence, exploitation and abuse, which they must be protected from. How children are nurtured, educated and protected requires an amalgamated approach, encompassing health security, education security and protection from crimes, including child marriage, child labour, child violence and lack of shelter, among others. CINI's project has been able to engage multiple stakeholders and bring about a preventive approach to protect children from being dropped out of the system and avoid the risks posed by the situations around them, namely, early marriage, children engaged in hazardous labour or becoming victim of trafficking.

Children not attending school are in most cases unaccounted for in school records. They are therefore “invisible” and often not considered in policy and decision-making. The lack of data and information on children who are the most excluded from education are making it even more difficult to reach these children.

An extensive household survey was conducted by child volunteers from the cohort⁷ group at CINI. The involvement of children from the locality gave better access and coverage in the area. The coverage of the survey was in the wards 26, 46, 47, 51, 56, 57, 58, 59, 65 and 66. In total 9550 children were covered. Children between the age of three years till eighteen years were covered during the survey.

The magnitude of number of **out-of-school children** (OOSC) in the area remains high despite efforts towards universal primary and basic education. The analysis showed, in the pre-schooling level, i.e., age group of 3-5 years, children out of pre-school or ICDS centre is as high as 25 percent. Nationally, rates of non-participation in schooling in pre-school age children is 12.4 percent⁸. Though in West Bengal, out of 3.7 lakh children in the age group of 3 to 4+ years, about 65.8 percent are out of ICDS centres⁹. The extent of school exclusion for primary school age children (6-10 years) is 5.6 percent and at lower secondary level 8.9 percent in project area.

Out-of-School - At a glance	Out-of-school children as a percentage of the total number of children in the age population		
	CINI Project Area	West Bengal	India
Pre-school (3 to 5 years)	25.0%	65.8%	12.4%
Primary (6 to 10 years)	5.6%	2.8%	6.4%
Lower Secondary (11 to 14 years)	8.9%	30.5%	5.7%
Secondary (15 to 18 years)	20.3%	17.3%	30.0%

Figure 17: Out of School – At a Glance

Early childhood care and education

Early childhood, defined as the period from birth to eight years old, is a time of remarkable growth with brain development at its peak. During this stage, children are highly influenced by the environment and the people that surround them.

Early childhood care and education (ECCE) is more than preparation for primary school. It aims at the holistic development of a child's social, emotional, cognitive and physical needs in order to build a solid and broad foundation for lifelong learning and wellbeing. ECCE has the possibility to nurture caring, capable and responsible future citizens.

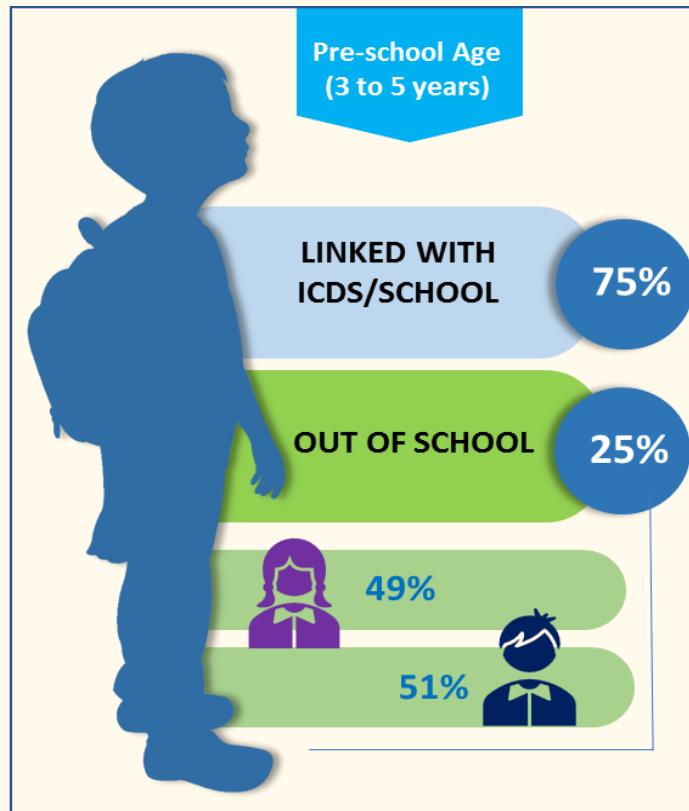
Target 4.2 of Sustainable Development
Goal 4: Ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education

⁷ Children of primary classes and of classes VIII and IX getting educational and overall developmental support from The Hans Foundation funded three-year project at CINI

⁸ Source: Global Initiative on Out-of-School Children, South Asia Regional Study, UNICEF 2015

⁹ Source: <https://wbexpress.com/school-education-scenario-west-bengal/>

As found from the household survey conducted by CINI, there is as high as 25 percent of the children in the pre-primary age of 3 to 5 years, who are out of school or ICDS centre. The phenomenon is similar across male and female child, ruling out gender related reasons.



Barriers and Enablers

During the facility survey, a total of 37 AWCs were found across the wards of 58 and 66. Some of these AWCs were a single unit and some had multiple units in one centre. These AWCs were situated in different places, such as in clubs, government buildings, or individual rooms in slums. Information about these AWCs were gathered by observation and from AWC workers, club workers & locals.

Figure 18: Linkage with ICDS or School among Children in Pre-School Age

Some of the reasons for low linkage with AWC are,

- ✚ Lack of awareness about need and importance of early childhood education and care among parents and stakeholders
- ✚ Gaps in quality of service at AWC, behavior and handling by centre workers not very conducive

The quality of pre-school education makes a crucial difference to children's learning in early primary grades. The key to ensuring that children succeed at school is to enable them to attain critical foundation skills of basic numeracy and literacy in the early grades. Without these basic skills, many children will struggle to keep up with the prescribed curriculum, and learning disparities will widen for disadvantaged children.

Early Childhood Education (ECE) is an important service provided by Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) and it is largely responsible for developing school readiness in children. For the preparation of formal schooling of children most important needs of the hour are, (i) physical facility of Anganwadi Centres (AWC), (ii) Supportive supervision of Anganwadi Workers (AWW) and (iii) creation of congenial environment at home.

POSSIBLE ACTION AREAS

- There is need to sensitize parents and family of children about the importance of early child care and education and generate demand by building awareness about the scheme
- Monitoring and provide support to increase efficiency and quality of service in the Anganwadi centre

Universal Primary Education

Looking at the findings from the household survey, there is clear indication of higher tendency of dropout among children with higher age. Considering the primary school age (6-10 years) to the Secondary school age (15-18 years), there is increasing trend of dropouts with the increase in age of child.

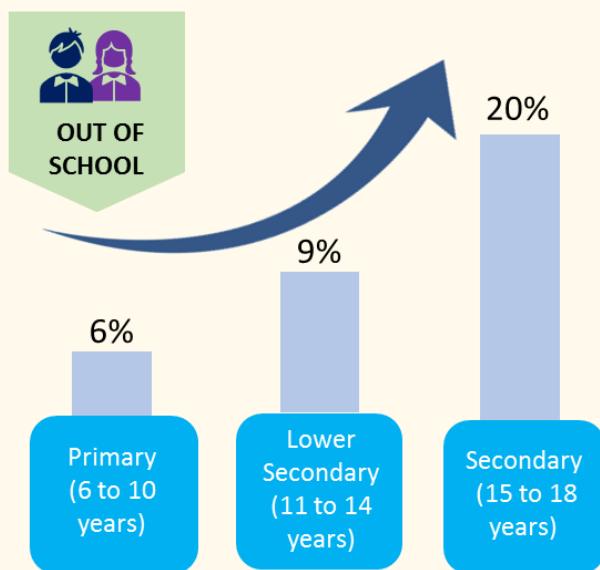


Figure 19: Out of School by Age

Looking further, at early stage there is similar presence of both male and females among those who are out of school. But the gender gap is skewed towards male child with the increase in age.

Being involved in labour for household earning is more common among the boy child and it increases with age. On the contrary, among the girl child there is higher involvement in household work or supporting family work.

Also coping with higher education as it advances to higher standards become a challenge for many due to lack of supportive educational techniques and processes at school as well as household.

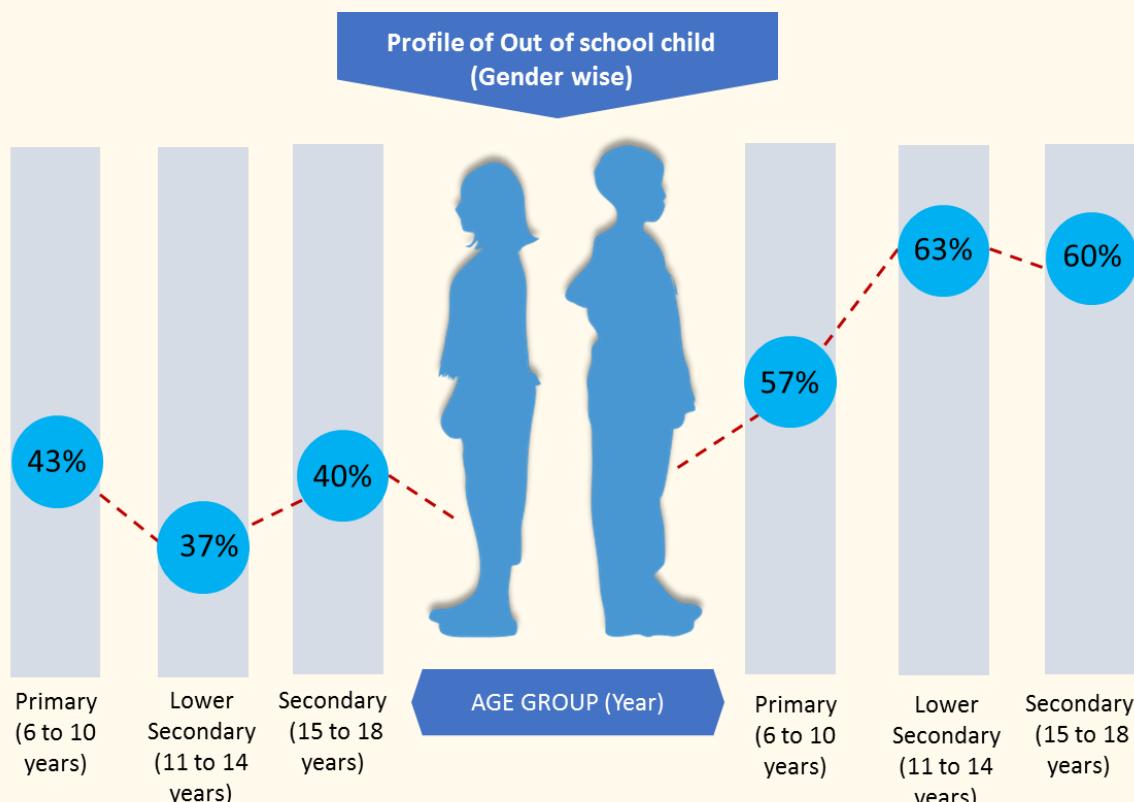


Figure 20: Profile of Out of School

Barriers and Enablers

Even though there is a rising consciousness about the need for education among current generation of parents, the universal participation and strong involvement in the process of learning is yet to be achieved. It is a complex interplay of access, quality, value perception, relevance, to name a few which keep children away from schooling and education.

Through discussion with students studying in upper as well lower primary, parents and other stakeholders there were several gaps in expectation identified, which can work as possible barriers in continuing studies with positive interest.

- ❖ **Availability of schools in the locality** - During the facility survey done in the wards 58 and 66 of Kolkata Municipal Corporation (KMC), it was found **that there are 112 schools**, in total across both wards. **In ward 58, there are 50 schools**, of which 28 schools are **government schools** while the rest are private; **in ward 66 there are 15 government schools** and rest are private. **These schools range from pre-primary to higher secondary, indicating, availability of facilities for access for children.**

However, inspite of availability some of the reasons for non-suitability of the school for the children in the area are,

- (i) **Presence of non-Bengali speaking population** (primarily Hindi speaking) who find it difficult to cope with the (Bengali) medium of teaching in the Government schools, unless studying in the same language from the beginning. Also, many times the language for communication at home is different from the language for communication at school – leading to low interaction and participation by the child in school.
- (ii) **Presence of children engaged in work** in order to contribute towards the family income. Due to fixed working hours which clash with the school timing, many children are excluded from school going – resulting irregular attendance or dropout from school. Seasonality in work also affect attendance during the peak work seasons – such as catering related jobs during winter months when marriages happen more frequently; due to harvest at native place, some migrate during those months alongwith other male members of the family.

POSSIBLE ACTION AREAS

- Explore ways to support non-Bengali speaking students in coping with the language used in teaching – bridge courses or interactive courses focused towards enhancing speaking, reading and writing skills in Bengali
- Teachers in schools also need to be sensitive and give special emphasis towards students with such lingual challenges – need for sensitization and training to handle such situations
- Explore the relevance and implementation of National Child Labour Project (NCLP) scheme to rehabilitate the working children

Availability of infrastructure and facilities in schools - Facilities in School are instrumental in enhancing the quality of education. As per NCERT, school infrastructure includes availability of art room, laboratories, (science, mathematics), library apart from adequate number of classrooms. Other than that, clean drinking water facility, clean and separate toilets for girls are important to maintain the students' interest to attend school. Availability of facilities like science labs, mathematics lab, art rooms help students get a first-hand learning experience by performing various experiments on their own. It also makes teaching and learning easy both for the teachers, and the students. Clean bathrooms purified drinking impact the health and hygiene of students and therefore, essential for their development.

The RTE Act lays down the norms and standards for a school and provides that a school with an all-weather building should consist of the following:

- i) At least one class-room for every teacher;
- ii) An office-cum-store-cum-HM room;
- iii) Barrier-free-access;
- iv) Separate toilets for boys and girls;
- v) Safe and adequate drinking water facility to all children;
- vi) A kitchen where mid-day meal is cooked in the school;
- vii) Playground;
- viii) Arrangements for securing the school building by boundary wall or green fencing
- ix) Library: There shall be a library in each school providing newspapers, magazines and books on all subjects, including story books.
- x) Play material, games and sports equipment shall be provided to each class as required

During the discussions with the students of different schools in the area several issues with regard to lacuna in infrastructural facilities and how it is detrimental in the school going experience has come up. In order to gauge the emotions derived from school going, students were asked "how they feel when they go to school".

Among the school going children¹⁰, the extent of positive feeling in terms of being "happy and excited" was reported by 64 percent of the students. Whereas, among 36 percent some negative emotion was expressed. Even though the school going experience is a function of several things, infrastructural facilities also play an important role.

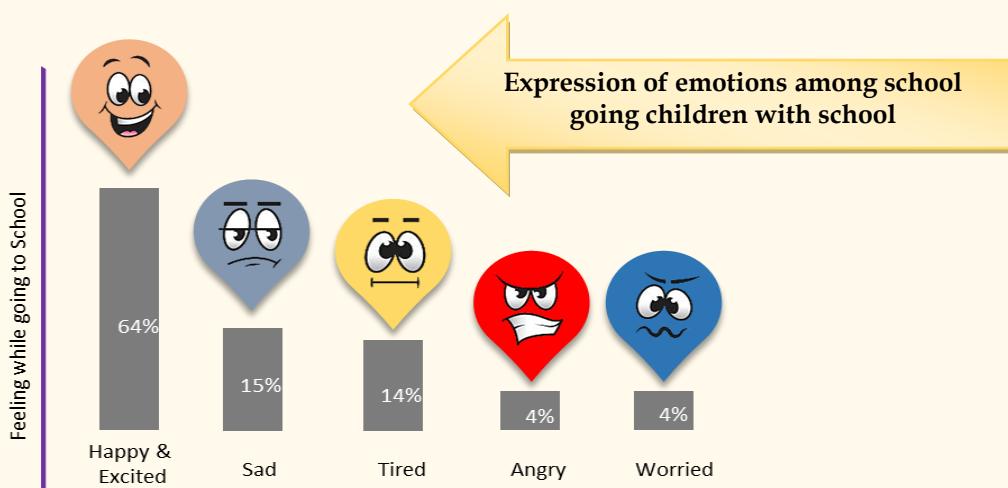
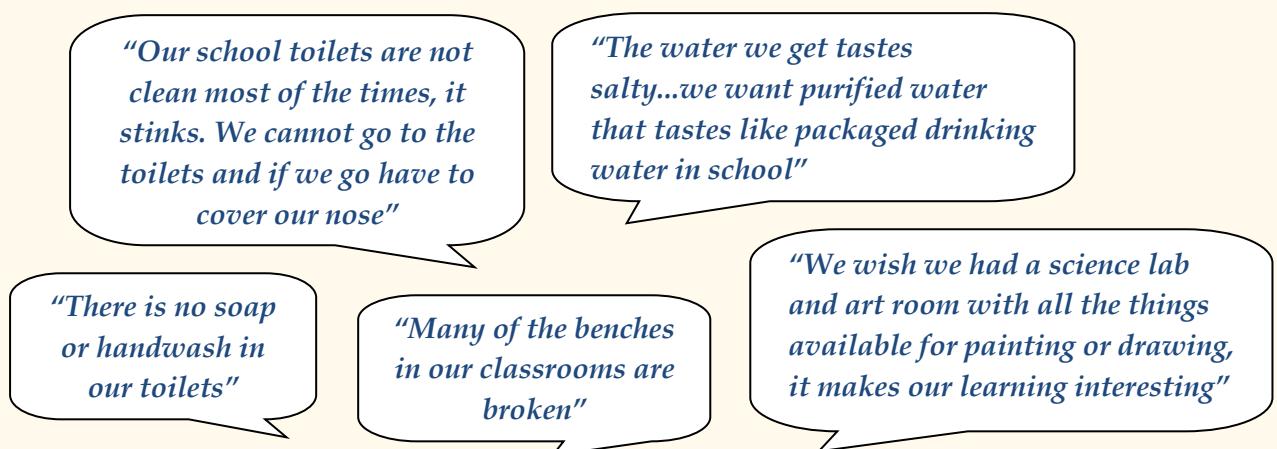


Figure 21: Emotions associated with "Going to School"

¹⁰ 112 school going students were covered through primary discussions in Ward 58 and 66

Some of the grievances expressed by school going children in the locality with regard to infrastructural facilities are the following,



POSSIBLE ACTION AREAS

- Making students, parents, teachers and stakeholders aware of norms and standards of school infrastructure as per RTE Act – create the demand for rights and utilization of funds
- Discussion and action planning for improvement in the School Management Committee meetings – formally regularize monitoring, prepare plans and update on developments

Quality of Education – although the right to education has been reaffirmed on many occasions, the qualitative dimension of learning has remained tacit. Emphasis is given on the completion of full course of primary schooling, but no specific reference is made towards its quality. Achieving universal participation depends fundamentally upon the quality of education available – how well pupils are taught and how much they learn have a crucial impact on frequency and duration of school attendance.

Despite a growing consensus about the importance of quality, there is much less agreement on what the concept means in practice. Two principles¹¹, however, characterize most attempts to

define the quality of education. The first, which identifies learners' cognitive development as the major explicit objective of all education systems, sees the success with which the latter achieve this as one indicator of their quality. The second emphasizes the role of education in promoting commonly shared values, and creative and emotional development – objectives whose achievement is much more difficult to assess.

Human rights legislation reflects a belief that all children can develop basic cognitive skills, given the right learning environment

¹¹ Reference: Education for all - Global monitoring report, 2005

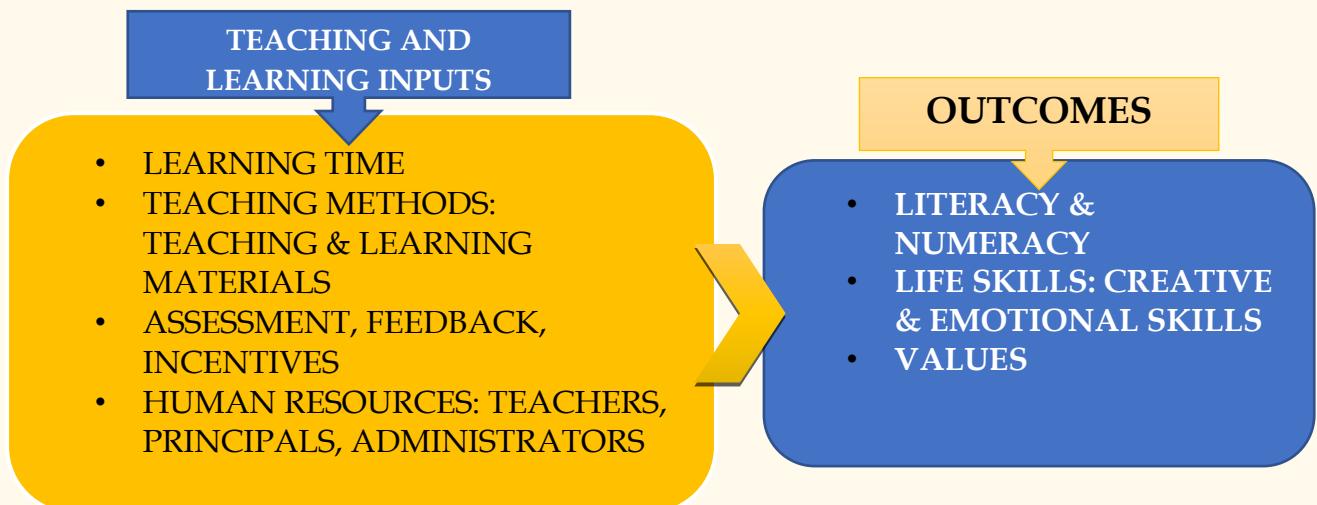
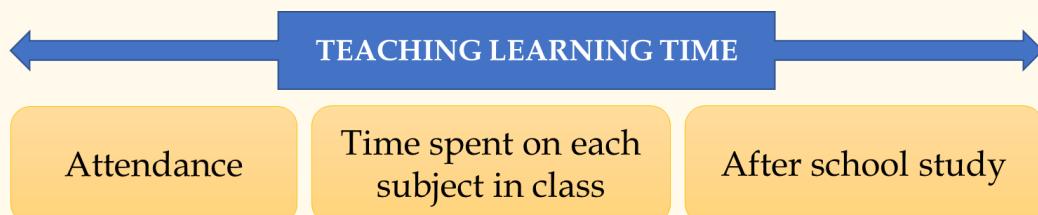


Figure 22: Framework for Understanding Quality of Education

The broad framework and indicators of quality of education are seen in the teaching and learning spectrum. Primarily focusing on **learning time** which is linked to school going practice, teachers' time spent with students in classroom and students' overall time spent in studying. **Teaching methods** another important determinant, it includes interpersonal dimensions as well as material resources used. **Assessment, feedback and incentives** towards both teaching and learning is important for positive continuance and improvement. **Human resources** involved in the teaching process play the most vital role in the process of child education. The outcomes are beyond academic achievement, rather becoming a confident and empowered social being with required skills and values.

Learning time: Instruction time has high correlation with academic achievement among students. The broadly agreed benchmark for hours of instruction per year for each pupil is 850-1000 hours¹². The amount of class time spent on mathematics, science and language strongly impacts performance in these subjects.



¹² Source: EFA, Global monitoring report

Along with attendance of children, it is important that there is regular attendance among teaching staffs. How teachers spend their time with students has a major impact on learning outcomes.

CINI Project Experience and Success

(1) Tracking attendance lead to regularizing school going: Considering the children in the project area, the chances of irregular attendance are high which directly impacts the learning time. With the objective of keeping focus on student attendance, CINI has introduced improved and innovative monitoring techniques and tools used by the volunteer teachers to track the attendance of students attending the centre. The visual techniques are easy to understand and user-friendly for educationally weaker communities to use. The visual representation by the use of colours draw immediate attention towards students who are irregular in attending classes.

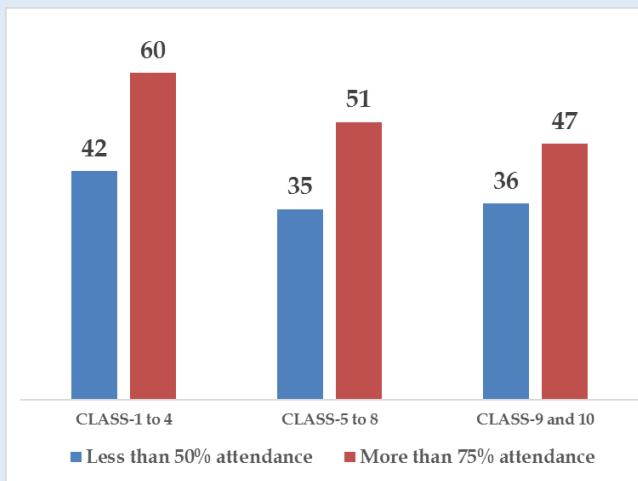


Fig 23: Exam Results (% marks) by Attendance in CINI centre

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
BENGALI	HIS		
ENGLISH	SCIENCE		
MATHEMATICS	SCIENCE		
	SCIENCE		

Fig 24: Student Attendance Tracking

There is clear improvement in performance due to higher attendance at the CINI centres among students. Analyzing the school result of children attending CINI centres, it is found that among those with higher attendance, the percentage marks achieved is higher than among those with lower attendance.

(2) After school support impact learning outcomes: children who had attended after-school camps coordinated by CINI volunteers showed greater learning gains.

Learning level of 120 students randomly selected from standard IV, V and VI were obtained. Among the batch of children, there were 60 students who received support from CINI after school centres and another 60 students, who were not associated with the programme. The learning level indicated the learning outcome of each student with respect to the academic class they were enrolled in. This learning level was obtained through written level test tools for the three subjects, English, Bengali and Mathematics.

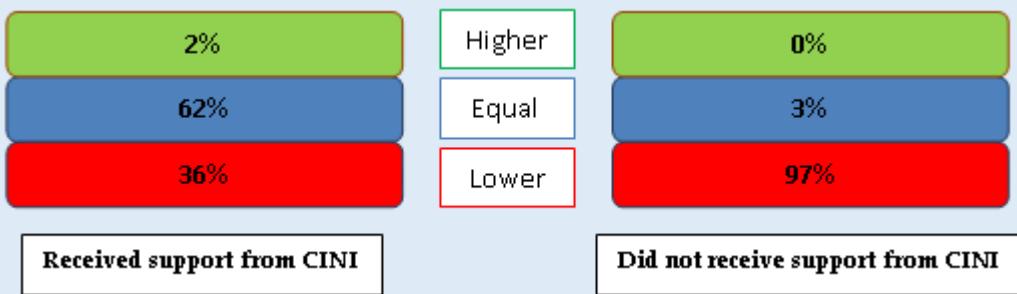


Figure 25: Performance in Level Test

At an overall level, there is demonstration of better performance by children receiving after school learning support from CINI centres. Majority of the students have been able to match with the school level learning (62%) which is significantly higher than those not receiving any support.

It was also found that the proportion of children who were at a lower learning level, increased with the higher classes. Thus, the need for after school supportive learning becomes more pertinent at higher classes.

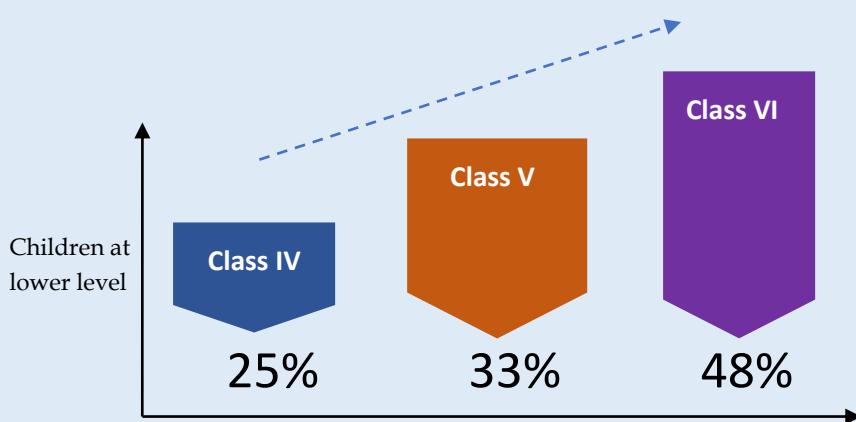


Figure 26: Class wise % of children at lower level than their academic class

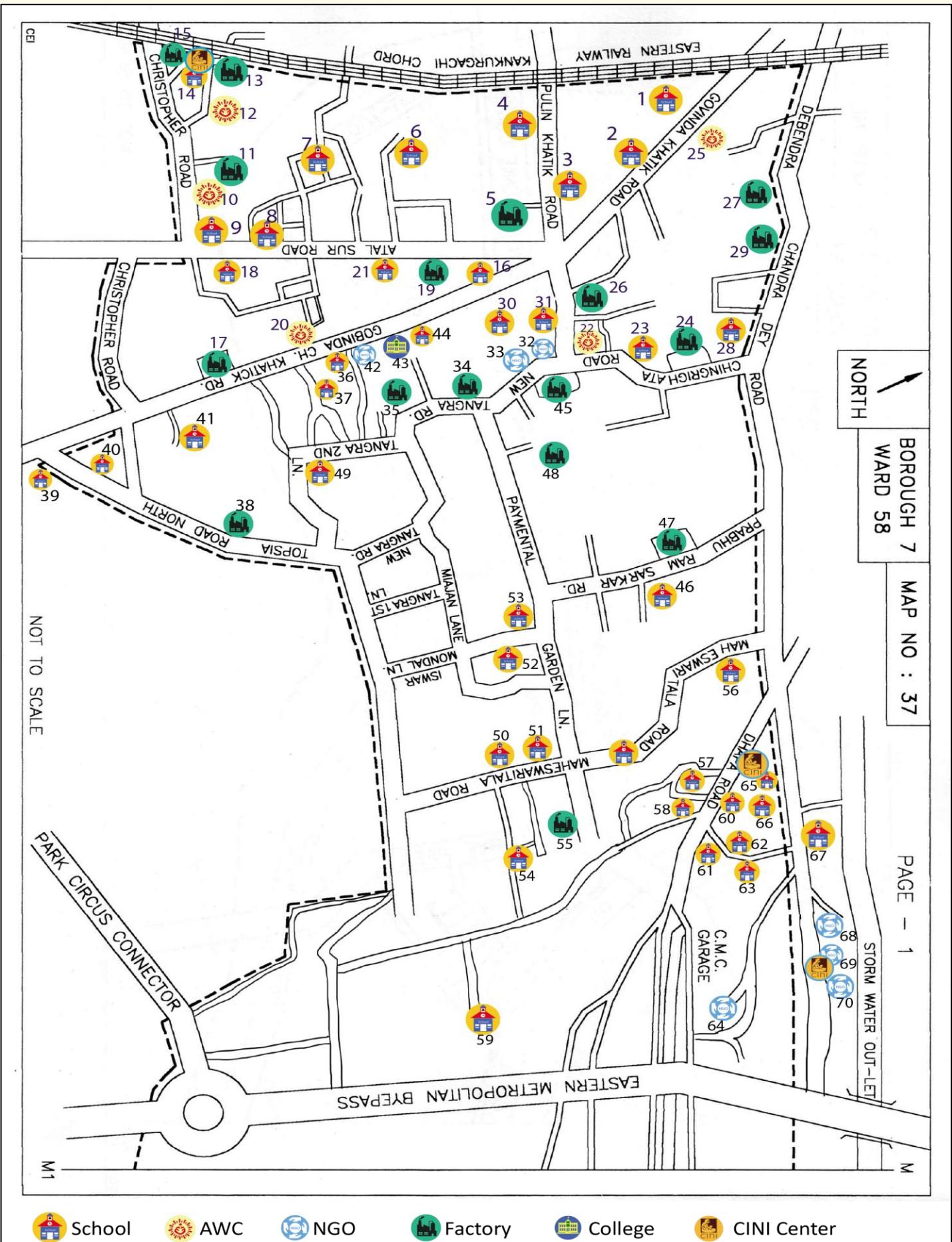
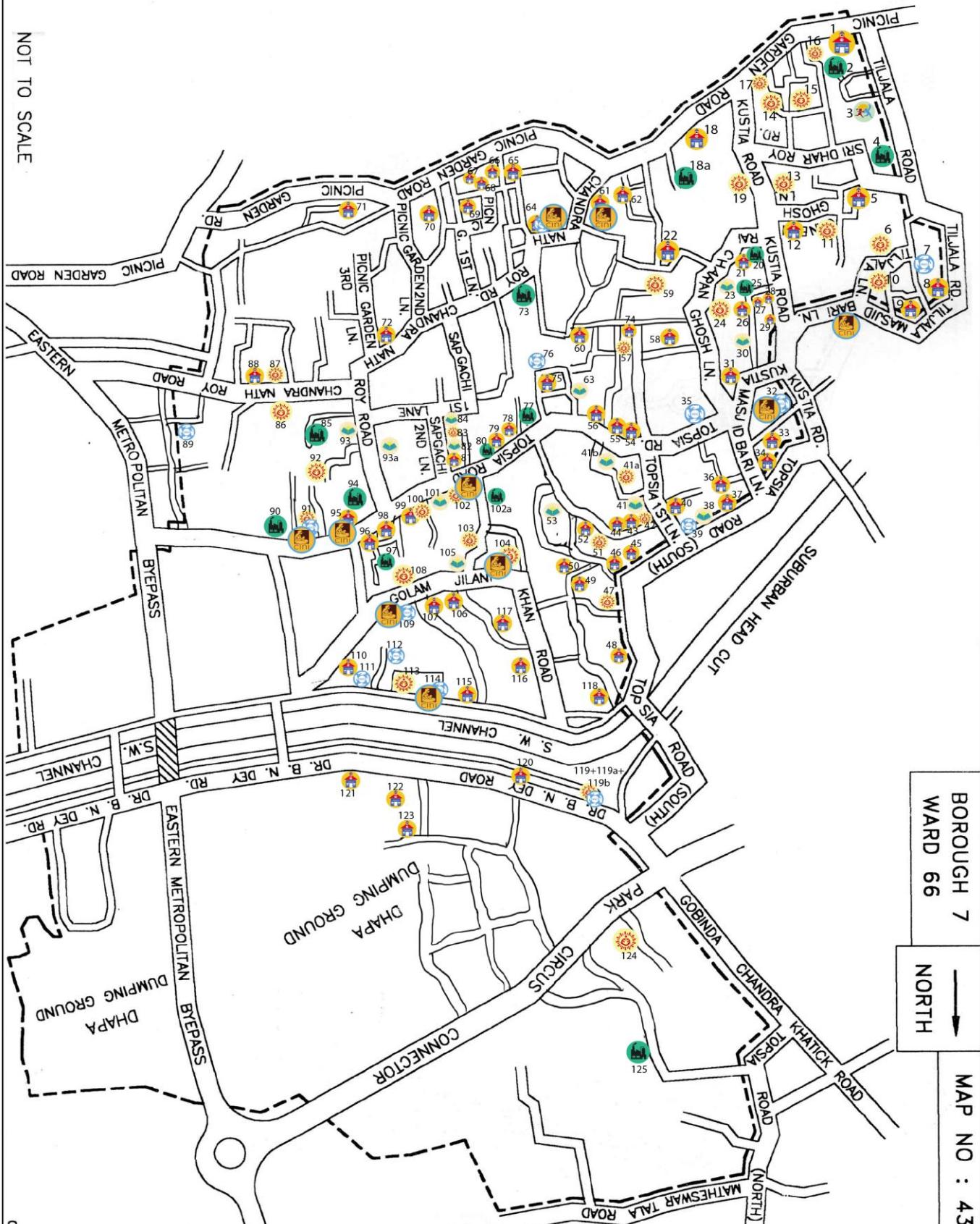


Figure 27: Map indicating CINI centres in ward

NOT TO SCALE



School



AWC



NGO



Factory



Creche

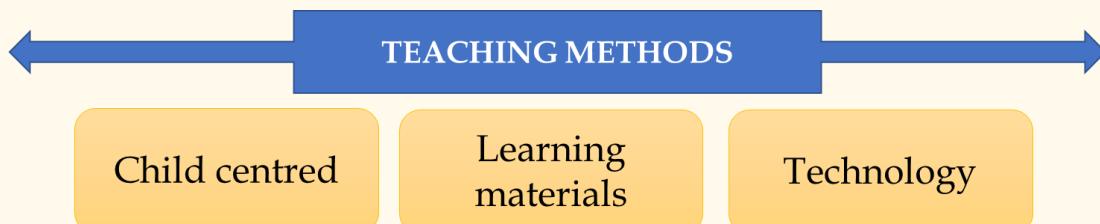


CINI Center

Figure 28: Map indicating CINI centres in ward 66



Teaching methods: a significant challenge in the current situation is that children are simply not learning enough, even when they are in school. In spite of being in the school going habit, children are struggling with learning basic reading and numeracy skills. The teaching methods definitely contribute a lot on the learning by children. Many commonly used teaching styles do not serve children well in their learning process, they are often too rigid and rely heavily on rote learning.



Innovation in the form of using technology can help improve learning by enriching teachers' curriculum delivery and encouraging flexibility in student learning. However, new technology is not a substitute for good teaching. There is need to focus on each child's development and taking corrective action so that the child can continue education comfortably.

CINI Project Experience and Success:

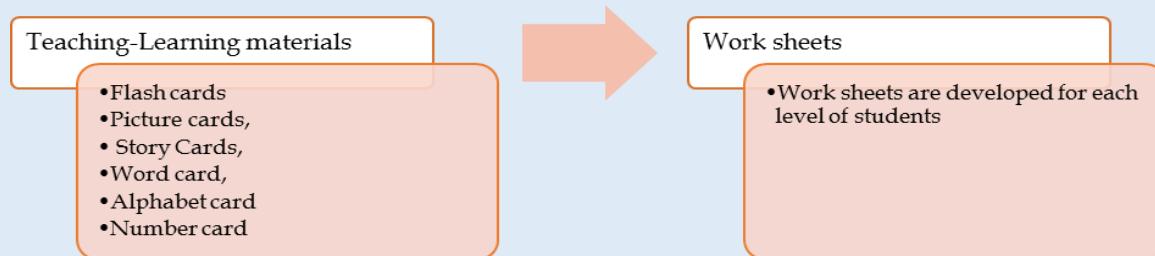
(1) Educational Camps to bridge the gap in learning level

Some students especially from disadvantaged background, at times fall behind rest of the batch of students in terms of reading and writing competencies. It becomes pertinent to bridge this gap among such students, so as to keep them within the education system, as many times this leads to lack of interest for continuation of education and subsequently dropout. CINI's **Educational Camps** are such an innovative technique to bridge the learning gap with the aim to move majority of students up to the highest ability group by the end of the intervention so that

they are able to read basic texts with proper understanding, have confidence to do basic arithmetic operations and are able to express themselves effectively both orally and in writing.

The **Educational Camps** focus in grouping of children at the learning level rather than by grade. Innovative teaching methods and Teaching Learning Materials (TLM) are used, for each group and by utilizing a combination of activities among children especially in the initial growing age studying in between Grade 2 to Grade 4. Reading-writing skill of all children are bridged up with continuous assessment process and further interventions. The camps are conducted as a 72 hours package from alphabet level to paragraph level among the children to bridge up the reading and writing skills in language group.

RESOURCES USED



SUCCESS ACHIEVED

The educational camps were conducted in 12 different primary schools namely- Deshbandhu main, Sarat Chandra Sur, Purbanchal Prabhati Sangha, Beleghata Shanti Sangha for Boys, Tarun Tirtha, Jib Shiva Mission, Rabindranath Vidyabhavan, Panchkari Radharani Adarsha Vidyalaya and Pally Unnayan Prathamik Vidyalaya. In total, 237 students were exposed to the intervention across the above-mentioned schools in two phases. Success was achieved in all camps as there was **Intra-Level Improvement¹³** among 11.9% of the students and 68.2% **Inter-Level¹⁴ Improvement**. While 13.9% of the students showed same level of aptitude even after the intervention. The camps also had a positive impact in reducing absenteeism among students as 12.6% absent during baseline went down to 3.3% during end line.

School authorities have formally acknowledged the contribution of CINI in *helping to ensure advancement and growth of education among children* in their school. The methods and tools have been found *useful and scientifically constructed which enhanced the competency level of the slow learners as well as fulfilled the learning gaps of students*. The school has also shown interest in *adopting the Innovative Teaching Learning Materials* in their institution¹⁵.

(2) Innovative Teaching Methods for Improving Student Learning

The use of innovative and interactive learning and monitoring materials during class interactions and has resulted in improved student learning. The key to success being a thoughtful teacher who keeps innovating to meet the gap in students' learning capability and achieve success in terms of better participation and performance.

¹³ Within same level improvement

¹⁴ Improvement by jump in level

¹⁵ Source: Certificate of appreciation awarded to CINI by Head Master of Sarat Chandra Sur Institution (Primary), Pottery road, Kolkata

Micro innovations for better learning experience among students – community volunteers at different centres use various innovative techniques to address the issues among students in the respective centre.

- Use of technology or visual methods for better retention among students - “*When I teach history, I try to show them videos on my phone. One such example is when I was teaching the students about French revolution, I showed them a video, it helped children to retain the details better than others*”- Mobile Teacher at ward 66
- Since the students come from varied background and community, some students find it difficult to cope – one of the barriers to understanding is difference in teaching language and language spoken at home as several non-Bengali or Hindi speaking children study in Bengali medium Government institutions - “*Since many of the students speak in Hindi at home in my area, they have a tendency to speak in Hindi during classes too, however since they are studying in Bengali medium schools they also need to speak in Bengali. Therefore, during my class- I ask the students to talk to me in Bengali while I talk to them in Hindi so both will learn*”
- Making learning simpler by using interactive methods – “*I have taught tables of simple numbers by playing a game in the class where, the children sit in a circle and clap. For example, if I am teaching table of 2, the 2nd and 4th and 6th student will clap.... and so on. This made the lesson easier and more engaging for the students*”

Assessment, feedback and incentives: Regular, reliable, timely assessment is a key to improving learning achievement among students. At classroom level, assessment may be classified as summative (evaluating achievement through tests) or formative (diagnosing how each pupil learns through observation). The goals are to give learners feedback and to improve learning and teaching practices.

However, assessment needs to be seen as the means to achieve better learning and not the end of learning. Often the fear of examination proves detrimental in the process of learning. As per RTE Act 2009, the development of curriculum would ensure the all-round development of the child, building on the child’s knowledge, potentiality and talent and **making the child free of fear, trauma and anxiety through a system of child friendly and child centred learning**.

However, in our study of 112 students of the age 8 years to 19 years, it was found that 57 percent reported feeling of fear or worry due to exams. The occurrence of fear is across both the gender.

Fear of Exams - Age wise data

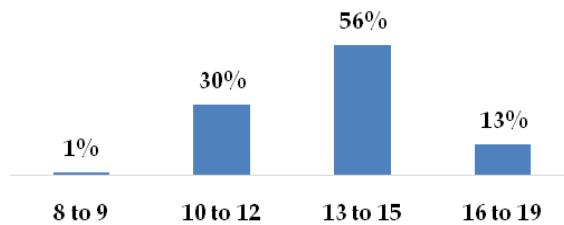


Fig 29: Age wise data on children who reported fear due to exams

Fear Of Exams - Gender wise data

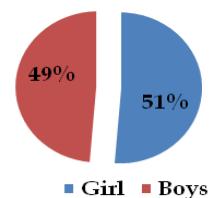


Fig 30: Gender wise data on children who reported fear due to exams

There is need to make children free of fear through counselling and make them understand that examinations are only means of assessing one's learning and not the end of career. Likewise among parents and teachers also the sensitization needs to be done, that the child needs adequate support to accept performance in exams and should not feel discrimination or pressure that can create negative impact in their tender minds.

Classroom-based assessment tools can help teachers identify, monitor and support learners at risk of low achievement and focus towards their positive development to ensure continuation of education. Students can also make considerable gains if they are offered opportunities to monitor their own learning, a possible mechanism can be, using self-evaluation cards that can be administered alone or with the help of another child. This can boost children's self-confidence and learning achievement can improve.

CINI Project Experience and Success:

(1) Supportive after school centre conducted by CINI Volunteers

By creating the centres, CINI has made an attempt to create community-based preventive model to prevent children from being dropped out of the system and avoid the risks posed by the situations around them, namely, early marriage, children engaged in hazardous labour or becoming victim of trafficking.

The children are selected basis the following criteria,

1. Secondary data analysis on education to select geographical locations
2. Area Survey (community & school) to identify children with need of the support
3. Prioritization is done based on the following criteria-
 - i) 1st generation learners
 - ii) Children with learning gaps
 - iii) Children with no support at home
 - iv) Children prone to become labour &/or early marriage
 - v) Migrated family from others areas/regions
 - vi) Children who have never been to school or drop-out

Through regular assessment, children are individually tracked on their development and need for support.

SUCCESS ACHIEVED: Analyzing the assessment scores of two quarters of 354 students studying between classes VI to X, there is evidence of improvement among significant number of students. The improvement is higher in subjects like History and Geography, followed by language and science. This gives an indication of development in terms of subject test performance within a quarter; thus, subject specific support can result in positive improvement among students.

Percentage of children showing improvement over last quarter	
History	32%
Geography	28%
Bengali	21%
English	21%
Physics	16%
Mathematics	16%
Life Science	15%

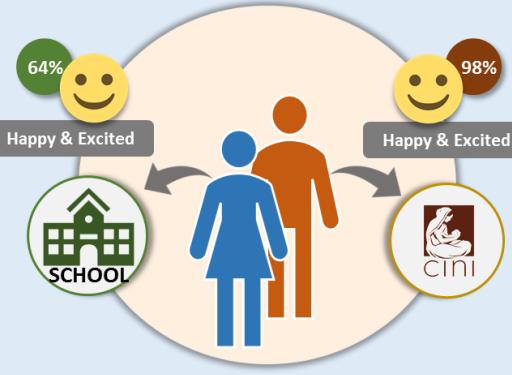


Figure 31: Impact of coming to CINI Centre among students

The centers provide a positive study environment for the children living in disadvantaged situations. Children attending the centre admit individual attention given towards them and also acknowledge the quality of support provided. They feel '*free and frank to share own problems, ask questions without fear and participate confidently*'. Majority of the children admit that they do not get the environment or motivation to study at home and often are distracted. But the centre provides a safe space for them to study together, friends from other schools also give the scope to interact and interchange own experience.

There is significant improvement in positive feeling as children feel happy and excited to go to the CINI centre for learning.

Teachers: the most important resource to ensure learning and to solve the learning crisis, all children must have teachers who are trained, motivated and enjoy teaching, who can identify and support weak learners, and who are backed by well-managed education systems. It is rightly said, an education system is as good as its teachers, enhancing their potential is the key to better quality of learning.

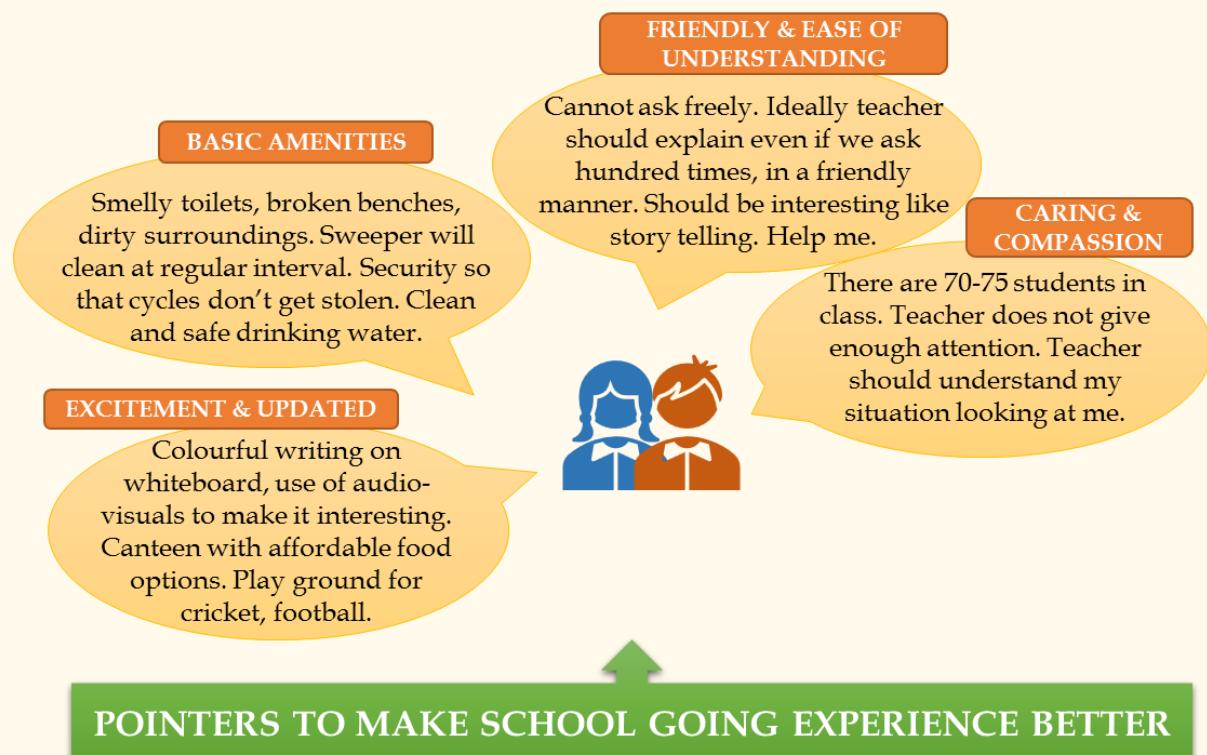


Figure 32: Pointers to make School going Experience Better – as expressed by children

The quality of the teacher can be classified into the following broad aspects:

- 1) Teacher qualification:** educational background and experience in the teaching field that may be considered as a particular attribute that the teacher brings to class. Some of the indicators being coursework, grade, degree, subject matter education, and training.
- 2) Teacher characteristics:** individual qualities and attitude toward teaching career, often reflected through kindness, ease and comfort of interacting with others in class and school.
- 3) Teacher practices:** teaching styles or strategies which could lead to class satisfaction and expectations is a function of communication skills, clear learning objectives and assessment methods, triggering students' intellectual challenge, to name a few.

CINI Project Experience and Success:

(1) Teaching resources within community supplementing learning needs

Community volunteers are identified within the community with the objective of better relatability and understanding of the local education needs. The volunteers receive offsite and onsite training support from CINI to understand the issues of the children in a better way and to perform their teaching duties properly.

The community volunteers are engaged in regular workshops and training to keep their motivation and innovation in teaching methods high. Individual focus is given on each child, there is more investment from the volunteers which pay-off through strong bond between teacher-student and positive development among students.

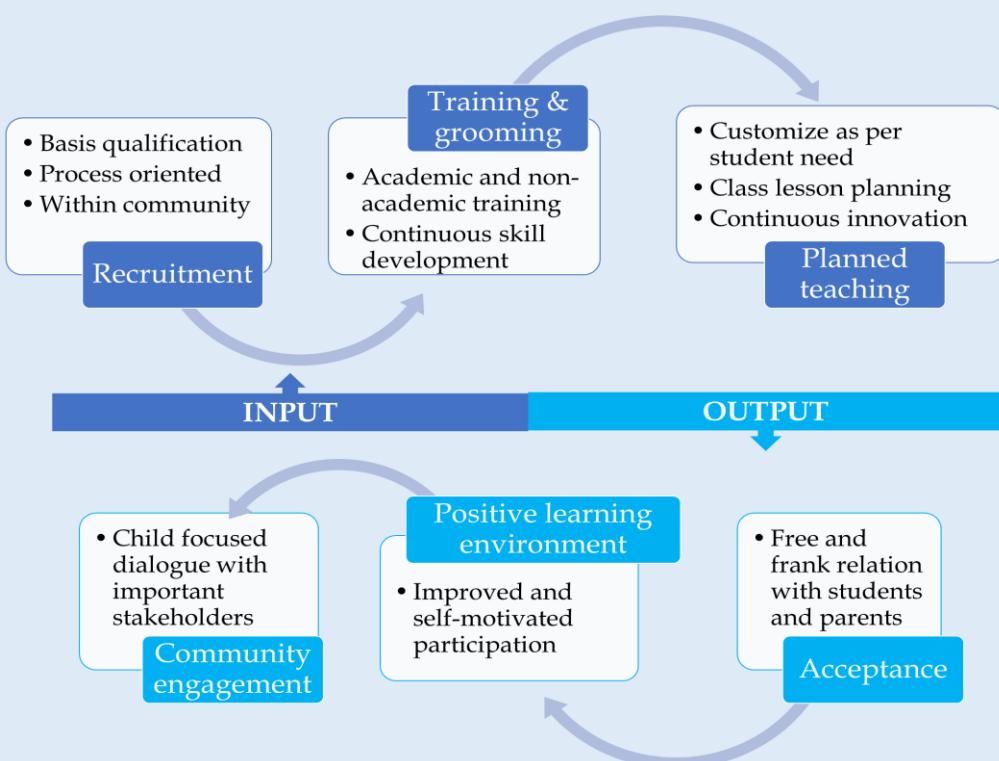


Figure 33: Creating Teaching Resources within Community

The community volunteers also play an important role in making the parents of children actively involved in their child's education and development. There is higher vigilance and supportive attitude towards the child - parents acknowledge the need to encourage the child, understand their mental condition and provide support when needed.

(2) Becoming the child's friend, philosopher and guide

The volunteers are regularly trained on techniques for teaching and managing classroom. It equips them to monitor the behavior of students in the class and identify children who were undergoing stress or any sort of problem. They provided first level counseling to the child, by talking to them and making the child share his/her situation or problem. Depending on the intensity of the problem, the teacher refers the child to CINI counseling session. A counseling register is maintained at the centre. The entire process is handled with sensitivity, care and secrecy, so that the child does not feel uncomfortable or any kind of humiliation.

Some cases handled by CINI centre teachers,

Stopping a child from dropping out of school, eloping and getting into early marriage: "*There was a student in class 9 whose performance in studies was going down, her mother also complained to me that she returned home late after coaching. One day I found out that she was going out with another boy and that is why she was going home late. I told her parents not to shout or beat or rebuke her.*

I started to talk to her and explained the importance of education in life- how education will give her respect and ability to stand on her own feet. I also cited examples from within the community whom she knew, those who have studied and are self-sufficient and those who have gotten married at early age and their plight now.

Slowly I was able to change her mind and channel it back to education. She has now secured good marks in school and is sincere in her studies"

Identification and referral to professional counselling in case of severe problem: "*If a child suddenly stops talking in the class, we try to ask first and if they don't answer, we try to understand through observation... then we try to talk to them and make them feel comfortable to share their problems. If the problem appears grave and beyond our counseling, we refer the child to CINI counselor; We make sure that the child doesn't understand that they are being referred and make the process as smooth as possible"*

I now know how to handle children who are vulnerable, there were 30 students in my centre initially, it has now increased to 75. I tell my students also to spread the word and refer other needy children who are in need of educational support

The students confide in us- they even sometimes share things that they don't even share with their mothers...it has increased our confidence to work better

We learn new techniques of teaching and managing classroom, it happens every month

We try to make learning easier, if a child does not understand something during class, s/he can ask as many times without being hesitant

CINI Centre Teachers

We talk and counsel the child in case of any difficulty or when we see them distancing from studies



Overall development through Life skill training - Life Skills include psychosocial competencies and interpersonal skills that help people make informed decisions, solve problems, think critically and creatively, communicate effectively, build healthy relationships, empathize with others, and cope with managing their lives in a healthy and productive manner. Through several trainings and workshops CINI has been working in the area of development of life skills among young people. One crucial step towards this aspect has been the development and use of "Life skill training manual".

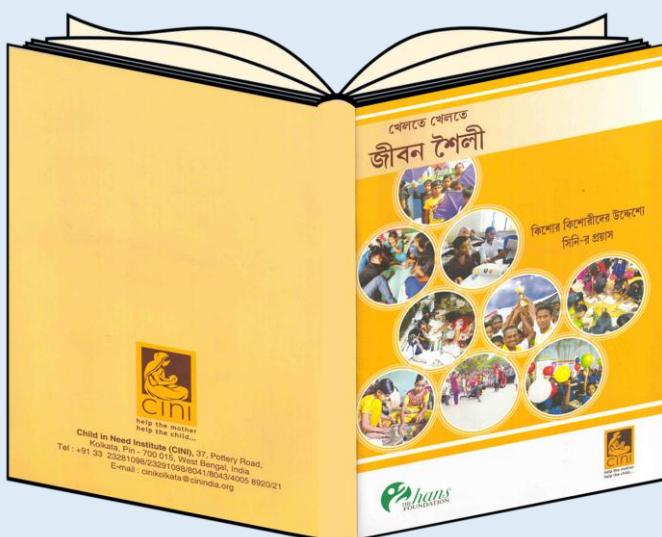


Figure 34: Life Skill Development Manual for Young People

skills as recommended by WHO on the following topics,

Self awareness, empathy, critical thinking, creative thinking, decision making, problem solving, effective communication, with emotions. The manual has a mix of real life situations and contexts, stories bringing out situations where different skills are needed to be applied. It empowers adolescents with improved decision making skills, abilities that promote mental wellbeing and competencies to face the realities of life. The methods used are participation through small groups and pairs, brainstorming, role play, games and discussions.

The manual covers topics related to the ten basic life

Possible improvement could be in terms of making the children interact with the module more frequently – some ways to increase involvement could be by issuing the book for self-learning to children visiting the centre, on regular basis spend time discussing a chosen topic and working jointly the exercises, sharing similar experiences or ways adopted to tackle such situations.

Focus on developing technical skills and improve employability of youth – considering the young adults, those studying in secondary level, there is need to integrate vocational education. Along with awareness about institutions and short courses on awareness about various options of vocational training, apprenticeship programmes is the best way to acquire this skill. Hence, some areas to work on can be, initiate identification and linkage development with technical institutes or vocational training institutes.

Possible steps and way forward could be undertaking an identification exercise to understand the skill requirements in the area and among local businesses; tie up with relevant organizations or technical institutions and initiate courses in school. Promote utilization of such technical services in the locality. There are several instances of academically weaker students or those with low interest towards classroom learning, generating interest towards coming to school for vocational training alongwith general studies and excelling in technical skills. The government scheme on skill building, 'Kaushal Bharat', which is a holistic approach towards enabling a strong skill development system, can be linked and better utilized.

**"A learner is not a vessel to be filled,
but a fire to be lighted"**

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