KIRAN (Knowledge and Involvement to transform Research into Action for Nutrition, health and overall development)

Established in 1995 to provide education to children in the slums of Mumbai, Pratham, currently is one of the largest non-governmental organizations in the country with outreach across India. ASER Centre, the autonomous research and assessment unit of Pratham, focuses on generating and disseminating evidence for action. Annual ASER (Annual Status of Education Report) surveys have been reporting learning level data from over 560 districts, surveying an average of 650,000 children in more than 16,000 villages across the country. Year 2014 marked a decade of the annual ASER surveys. PAHELI (People’s Assessment of Health, Education and Livelihoods) surveys carried out in 2006 and 2011 was an attempt to explore applicability of ASER-Pratham approach in education to other human development domains. Post 2011 PAHELI survey, the Social Sector Unit created within ASER Centre has taken up collaborative and independent work in this arena.

“KIRAN” – “Knowledge and Involvement to transform Research into Action for Nutrition, health and overall development” is an attempt to make a unique entry point to link directly with the communities at higher risk of undernutrition and poor stimulation-critical for learning and development.

“K.E.Y” (Knowing and Engaging for Young child food and feeding)- Component of KIRAN focusing on IYCF (Infant and Young Child Food and feeding)

A “K.E.Y” booklet has been prepared consulting standard IYCF guidelines. The booklet attempts to highlight the crucial issues of feeding at every stage from birth to two years. IYCF guidelines have been put in a simple 5X5 format where in five IYCF questions- “Why”, “What”, “When”, “How much” and “How” (Pate Ke Paanch Sawal- In hindi meaning five important questions) - have been answered for five sub stages from birth to two years. Technical nutrition and additional related concepts used while answering the five questions are explained in separate bulletins.

There are other modules giving information on Importance of ECD-first 1000 days, Growth monitoring, Food groups and Nutrients-Basic concepts, Immunization, Diarrhoea, Water, Sanitation & Hygiene. These constitute a supporting booklet and contain information on critical influencers for undernutrition in early childhood period.

Assessments: An application of ASER-Pratham philosophy of simple measurements for understandable evidence and community participation in domains such as Diarrhoea, Immunization, Water, Sanitation & Hygiene and Food & feeding. These assessment formats have been used:

a) to create understandable and actionable evidence around IYCF and related domains by involving students/local volunteers;

b) to engage with caregivers and involve them in assessing their child’s status and taking necessary corrective actions if required.
“Read Healthy” Story cards: Like story cards used in Pratham’s Read India program, cards have been developed emphasizing ECD-Nutrition, Health and overall development.

Recipe cards: Regionally adapted low cost nutritious recipe cards have been developed. These cards have a provision of engaging the community in assessment of nutritional quality of the recipes.

Activities:
- Simple activities have been developed to reiterate the concepts around KIRAN with the caregivers of young children which can be applied in their day to day lives.
- Some easy activities addressing Physical, Cognitive, Social, Emotional and Language development in young less than 3 years old children are included to sensitize caregivers about development milestones which can be done with children later at home.

Relevance of “KIRAN”

✓ Frontline workers: Could be a ready package for frontline workers to understand policy and research technical nuances and operate especially focusing on less than three year olds.
✓ Middle school children: Thematic workshops around KIRAN could actively instil these concepts early on and connecting with the science curriculum.
✓ Adolescents/youth: This group, irrespective of the gender, could use this information and experience for themselves and their families personally. Professionally it might add value to the skill sets required for employment opportunities like nurses, assistants, anganwadi workers- helpers etc.
✓ Practitioners: All local level practitioners might find KIRAN content and processes relevant to engage with community directly on IYCF and basic health issues.

KIRAN – Various Operational Models

The duration of the modules/workshops is flexible and demand driven. Different models currently in action are:

1. **Program mode:**
   - A multi partner collaborative RCT is using KIRAN content to reach out to less than 3 year olds across three rural districts in Odisha ([ECD-RCT-NIH Read more](#)).
   - Pratham Delhi, Gujarat and Bihar urban preschool program teams, in addition to teaching in the preschools are using KIRAN to reach out to the communities served.
   - Pratham Cuttack, Odisha urban teams have taken us KIRAN as an exclusive program to reach out to around 750 children less three year olds across 40 communities.

2. **Course mode:**
   - With Pratham Open School Program (POSE), “KIRAN” is foreseen to be offered as a life skill course to the alumni in the communities across 8 states where POSE is currently established. Not only students, but community also reaps benefits through community engagement activities and assignments.

3. **Workshop/Activity mode:**
   - Simple activities around KIRAN nutrition and health are being used by Pratham ITC supported preschool program teams to engage with community on these issues.
   - A 3 day workshop on Water & Sanitation was tried out with the middle school students in a government school in Solan district, Himachal Pradesh.
   - During a 7 day workshop with the students of Punjab Technical University during a NSS camp in Hoshiarpur, Punjab, students came together to create a block report card for IYCF and related domains.

For more information email- [contact@asercentre.org](mailto:contact@asercentre.org), [smriti.pahwa@asercentre.org](mailto:smriti.pahwa@asercentre.org)
Call 011-26716084 or Write to ASER Centre, B4/54, Safdarjung Enclave, New Delhi-110029