

PRESS RELEASE

PRATHAM LAUNCHES THE “LAKHON MEIN EK” CAMPAIGN ACROSS INDIA ON OCTOBER 21, 2015



Pratham and ASER have launched *Lakhon mein Ek*, a campaign to mobilize and energize volunteers in 100,000 villages and urban slum communities of India to change the status of basic learning in their communities. The campaign began on October 21 with the launch of a website and a message from Waheeda Rehman, who is the Ambassador of Pratham.

This is a landmark year for both Pratham and ASER. Pratham completes 20 years and ASER 10 years. Over these years we have worked to push the agenda to ensure that every child is in school and learning well. While ASER provided the report card on children’s enrollment and learning achievement, which enabled people to understand the situation on the ground and think about solutions, Pratham’s Read India programme worked with communities and governments to help children learn to read and to do basic mathematics. Read India has been proven through rigorous evaluations to be very successful.

Three years ago the Planning Commission changed its policy focus from inputs to learning outcomes. The Ministry of Human Resource Development too started pushing for improvement of reading and math skills in Std. 1 and 2. Subsequently, many states have also been attempting to adopt an outcomes orientation in their educational efforts. Learning outcomes figure prominently in the new NDA government documents outlining key areas to be discussed in the formulation of the New Education Policy.

As an organisation we believe that both nationally and internationally, the problem of low learning levels is now widely acknowledged. It is time to engage with citizens and communities across the country so that they can themselves bring about the change that is needed. India has achieved close to universal enrollment. Now what is needed is a “big push” to get citizens and governments, schools and communities, to focus on improving children’s learning. If parents, teachers, communities, and governments work together in villages and communities across India, we can bring about a massive change. In 2015 the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) will be conducted only in two states of India – Punjab and Maharashtra. Instead, this year, Pratham and ASER teams will spearhead the Lakhon mein Ek campaign across the country.

The campaign envisages an alliance of institutions, NGOs, corporates, and foundations that will reach 100,000 villages and communities of India by January 2016 to involve the residents in assessing the status of schooling and learning in their own communities, and to resolve to improve the status through their own voluntary action. In this FIRST PHASE the alliance will also approach governments at various levels and law makers in state and national legislatures to persuade them to take steps to sustainably improve learning levels in reading, writing, and mathematics in primary schools.

In subsequent phases of the campaign the intention is to work with local citizens across the country to create ‘reading villages’. The campaign will also aim to persuade a maximum number of district and state governments to take up learning improvement initiatives starting early in the academic year 2016-17 if not sooner.

For more information contact:

Ranjit Bhattacharyya; Telephone no: 011- 2671-6084; Email: lakhonmeinek@pratham.org

www.lakhonmeinek.org | www.pratham.org | www.asercentre.org