



January 14, 2016

“LAKHON MEIN EK” CAMPAIGN REACHES ONE LAKH COMMUNITIES & ONE CRORE CHILDREN

Each year for the last decade, the ASER report (Annual Status of Education Report) has been released in mid January, making current data on the status of children’s schooling and learning available to the public. Facilitated by Pratham, from 2005 to 2014, ASER surveyed a representative sample of rural children in every rural district of the country. Every year ASER reported that urgent action is needed to raise the worryingly low levels of basic reading and arithmetic of school going children in India. To provide a solution to this problem, Pratham has developed a cost effective solution for raising learning levels for children who are in Std. 3 and above. There could be other solutions too.

On the 10th anniversary of the ASER report, a different, bolder and much more ambitious exercise was launched. Rather than yet again bring bad news, this time, the objective is to connect evidence to action. The objective of the new effort was to find local residents in 100,000 villages and communities who were willing to take a look at the status of education in their own communities and then take steps to help children acquire these foundational skills. Once a problem is understood, it is natural for people begin to look for solutions.

Pratham’s “Lakhon mein Ek” campaign was launched on October 21, 2015. Individuals, institutions and organizations, and in some cases even government departments, responded to this call to action. In the last two months, the “Lakhon mein Ek” campaign has received unprecedented and widespread support from citizens and communities, enabling it to go well beyond the original target of 1 lakh villages.

By January 11, 2016, “Lakhon mein Ek” had reached more than 150,000 villages and communities. Close to 350,000 volunteers had joined the campaign and interacted with about 1 crore (10 million) children. Individuals and institutions across India are still joining in.

The participation of such large numbers of people in this exercise shows that there is tremendous scope for community action towards improving children’s learning. A key goal of the campaign is to facilitate this process. Technology is playing an increasingly important role. The “Lakhon mein Ek” app on the EkStep platform enables people with smartphones to leverage the power of digital technology for this cause. EkStep is developing free to use digital infrastructure to support and amplify various education initiatives across the country.

From January 17th to January 25th 2016, “Lakhon mein Ek” will catalyze “Reading Week” in 25,000 communities to demonstrate simple activities that can be done by children, parents and neighbours to build children’s foundational skills. We invite you to join us for “Reading Week” in any part of India that is convenient for you.

More than 96% of children in India are enrolled in school, but unless they learn well, the investment in schooling will not yield the dividends that are needed for individuals and families, communities and for the country as a whole. This citizen-led action may be the beginning of one of the largest efforts by ordinary people in India to improve the actual outcomes from basic education.

For more information, contact: Ranajit Bhattacharyya; email: ranajit59@gmail.com; phone: 011-2671-6084
Please also visit: www.lakhonmeinek.org