

Compilations of findings of Ground-Level Panels on Education facilitated by Praxis in 2017



Part of *By the People*, a project facilitated by Oxfam India, Centre for Social Equity and Inclusion and Praxis Institute for Participatory Practices supported by the European Union

# 1. Context of the Project and Ground Level Panels

The project By The People: Civil Society Organisation Led By Members Of Marginalized Communities Influencing Governance Processes For Inclusive Development aims at enhancing the leadership capacity of individuals from the most marginalised sections of society in six states of India. Oxfam India, Centre for Social Equity and Inclusion (CSEI) and Praxis-Institute for Participatory Practices have partnered together and with funding from the European Union, they support 56 Community Led Organisations (CLOs) in Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Jharkhand, Odisha and Uttar Pradesh, which are spearheaded by motivated leaders from Dalit, Tribal and Muslim communities to advocate for an equitable and inclusive society. The four themes that the project focuses on are education, food and nutrition, health and forest rights.

While capacity building across a series of organisational development areas is on-going with the CLOs, one of the project activities is organising ground level panels (GLPs). A Ground Level Panel (GLP) is an inversion of the traditional High level Panel of experts and academicians. Community Led Organisations (CLOs) develop and facilitate a GLP in order to promote the Community's Evidence Based Advocacy (CEBA) in order to address a key issue identified by the CLOs that is impacting the concerned community. It is a forum to bring together marginalised identities that have the *lived* experience of an issue, and in that capacity are 'experts' on that issue. The main purpose of any GLP is to analyse provisions of the policies from the lens of lived experience. The organising and formation of the GLP is a means of collecting, analysing and formalising community issues in a planned step which is completely led by community leaders and taken forward to larger Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and stakeholders including government in the form of policy advocacy. Through these processes, the excluded communities not only got an opportunity to raise the issues but also discussed ways and means to resolve them through local advocacy initiatives including charter of demands submitted to the line authorities.

During the year 2017, 14 GLPs were organised in which more than 787 community leaders from Dalit, Muslim and Tribal communities actively participated reaching out to representatives from CSOs, networks, government representatives, individuals, etc. has set the tone for thematic advocacy process. Out of the 14, six GLPs have been conducted on education with people from marginalised communities in Delhi, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Odisha.

# 2. Contextualizing the National Education Policy discussions

Education has always been conceived as the driver of transformation across nation's social, cultural, economic and political spheres. To spread equal educational opportunities and ensuring quality education for country's holistic development, Government of India announced its first National Education Policy (NEP) back in 1968. Since then the policy has been revised four times – in 1986 by the Rajiv Gandhi government, in 1992 by the Narasimha Rao government, in 2005 by the Manmohan Singh government and initiated in 2016 by the Narendra Modi government. The education policies implemented till 2005 have encompassed varied aspects like compulsory education for all children till 14 years, removal of disparities and equalizing educational opportunities, common all-India entrance examination for all professional and technical programmes and common minimum programme while the New National Education Policy drafted almost three decades later (after 1986) in 2016 aimed to address gender discrimination, creation of educational tribunals and building a common curriculum for Science, Mathematics and English subjects. The changing fabric of the people's requirements for enabling access to quality education, research, skill trainings and development of knowledge base have made Government of India bring in the new education policy.

# 3. Ground Level Panels on Education

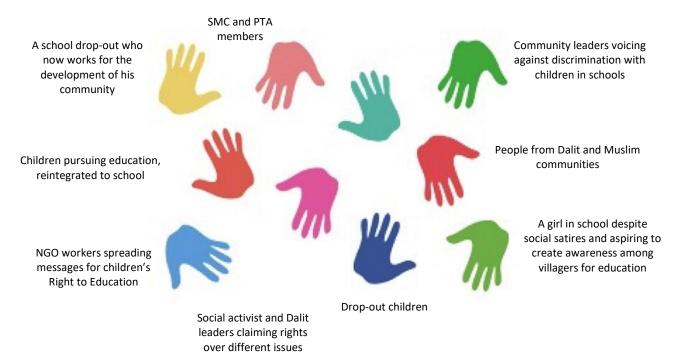
Contextualized within the backdrop, the need for a dialogue between various stakeholders becomes significant to delve into the grassroots and fill in the gaps for implementation of the NPE and interconnected measures. In order to generate dialogues around the lived experiences of marginalized communities, six Ground Level Panels were organized in 2017 and 2018.

The panels, during the conception and preparation phase, had two sets of aims. Related to the overall policy frame, one aim was to generate statements on what is required to ensure the education rights of marginalised people. Another was to contribute to the argument and the discourse on a right to education (RTE) in India, whilst illuminating ways in which government policies can be better implemented to reach the most excluded.

Related to broader processes of democratisation and empowerment, the purposes of the GLP were to support socially excluded people, and people living in poverty, to become agents of awareness-generation and of change within their own communities: through critical reflection on their own experiences. By involving local service providers in discussions, the GLPs also provided a platform for liasoning with government agencies. The panels were organized across various locations in five states of India, such as-

Thematically, the course of discussions in GLPs revolved around the issues of discrimination in educational spaces, accessibility to education for girl child, factors of school drop-outs and reintegration, problems faced by children in schools, preference of private school over government and likewise.

Some key characteristics of the panellists are detailed in the image below:



Participants joining the GLPs across various locations brought in different sets of experiences, weaknesses and thereby aspirations for betterment of existing situations.

In Janjgir, Chhattisgarh- a total of 14people from four different districts — Balrampur, Korba Janjgir-Champa and Bilaspur came together as representatives from five organizations viz. Jan Jagaran Samiti, Jan Hit Samaj Sebi Sanstha, Adivasi Seva Mandal, RMKS and Jan Vikas Parishad evam Anusandhan.

In **Ghazipur**, **Uttar Pradesh**-a total of 17socially diverse panellists has representations from different religious groups (Hindu, Muslim, and Buddhist), caste groups (SC, ST), Dalit communities along with community leaders, panchayat members, parents of children, SMC members, teachers and youths.

In **New Delhi**, the group arrived from various locations across the city like Adarsh Nagar, Jahangirpuri, Karol Bagh, Patel Nagar and Kusumpur Pahari. The panel consisted of young children within the age cohorts of 13 to 20. They shared the problems children face in schools, how the children from marginalized families are seen differently and discriminated, reasons for school-drop outs and so on. Their dreams fly high; they aspire to choose career options like police officer, cricketer, singer, teacher and army man.

In **Patna, Bihar**- the group of 18 members came from four districts of Bihar- Bhopal, Gaya, Samastipur and Nalanda. The group consisted of SMC members, panchayat representatives, parents, landless people, religious groups, Dalits, school-going children, graduates and post graduates and people from other castes.

In **Keonjhar and Dhenkanal, Odisha**- the group of 13 discussants were formed with various stakeholders including students, ward members and NGO representatives. The panellists were chosen from varied age cohorts, landholding status, ethnic affiliation, educational attainment status, and gender. Few of the panellists are in commendable role in claiming rights, raising community voices and contributing towards holistic development of their communities.

In **New Delhi**, the group of 16 children and adolescents arrived from different locations in New Delhi such as- Karol Bagh, Patel Nagar, Vasant Vihar, Shahbad Dairy and Adarsh Nagar. The group was composed of school going children, drop-out children and children who have reintegrated to school. The panel projected instances of school drop-outs and discrimination- in which class children tend to drop out, the reasons behind it and how they are mistreated in schools.

# 4. Findings from the Ground Level Panels

# 4.1Issuesthat emerged from the dialogue

Children face caste based, religious and gender-based discrimination within school as well as home Many government schools are in dilapidated condition with no electricity, access to safe drinking water and toilets

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Addiction to drugs and negative peer group influence are also significant reasons for school drop-outs

Dalit and other nondominant caste people are seen as 'untouchable' – children are discriminated when the mid-day meal is served

Teachers from Dalit communities are discriminated by the teachers from dominant castes

पुड सहर्षु कर्ने वे स्वरूप 312 की सहस्य 312 की सहस्य देशकारण सहस्य नहस्य करी

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School drop-out rate is maximum among the children of migrating families or the children who discontinue education and migrate for work

The School Management
Committee does not
function properly and
there are many loopholes
in administration

Girls are
restrained from
going to school if
the school is
located far from
home

The school education system
has been called
'Brahminical' where the
marginalized children are
pushed to the back instead
of moving forward

#### 4.1.1 Discrimination Matrix:

The children mapped the spaces of discrimination in terms of its intensity. The intensity is projected through weightage from 1 to 5 where 1 indicates lowest level of discrimination, 2 indicates lowest to medium, 3 indicates medium, 4 indicates medium to highest and 5 indicates highest level of discrimination.

The discrimination matrix includes the weightage collected from 18 locations in two states Bihar and Odisha with respect to two spaces – Anganwadi and school. The calculation of total frequency thereby depicts the average weightage – that indicates the level of discrimination. The average of 3.1 in anganwadi reflects medium level of discrimination whereas average 3.7 in school is closer to medium to highest level of discrimination.

Table 1: Matrix showing the level of discrimination in educational spaces

Location Code	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	Total Frequency	Average
Anganwadi	2	2	2	2	5	3	0	2	2	0	4	4	4	5	3	5	5	5	55	3.1
School	5	5	5	5	5	4	1	4	2	2	5	0	5	5	4	3	2	4	66	3.7

Source: GLP conducted in Odisha and Bihar, 2017

As 5 indicates the highest level of discrimination, the maximum weightage of discrimination in anganwadi and school across 18 locations is 90. The calculated frequency for anganwadi and school reflects the percentage of these two spaces where children face discrimination. Children in61% anganwadis and 73 % schools encounter discriminatory practices from teachers and peer groups.

# **4.1.2 Situation of School Drop-outs:**

Besides engaging with the reasons of school drop outs, the children also mapped out the classes in which they and their friends dropped out. It has been observed that the class of drop-out ranges from 1<sup>st</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> standards. These have been classified into three divisions and percentage of drop-out has been calculated for each division.

Table 2: Cases of drop-outs in different classes

Class	No. of Drop-outs	Percentage of Drop-outs			
Below 5 <sup>th</sup> and 5 <sup>th</sup> – 7 <sup>th</sup>	9	15.5			
8 <sup>th</sup> – 10 <sup>th</sup>	43	74.1			
11 <sup>th</sup> - 12 <sup>th</sup>	6	10.4			
TOTAL	58	100			

Source: GLP conducted in Delhi, 2017 and 2018

The table gives a larger picture of drop-outs in school education with the highest percentage in secondary followed by primary and higher secondary. The reasons for drop-out and non-integration pertain to- problems with home spaces, school environment and peer group behaviour, dislike for teachers, discrimination, failure in examinations, financial constraints within family which push the children to work, school's refusal for admission, migration for work, personal choices and accidents.

# 4.2 SDG Mapping

The discussions of the GLP participants have been mapped against the Sustainable Development Goals.

Table 3. Mapping panel's discussions against Sustainable development goals and their targets

Sustainable Development Goals	SDGs and Targets	Problems Identified and Inferred
Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	4.1 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes 4.2 By 2030, ensure that all	<ul> <li>Many parents do not send their children to school, rather question why they want to study</li> <li>Poverty in family doesn't allow children to study, rather pushes them to work and earn to</li> </ul>

Sustainable Development Goals	SDGs and Targets	Problems Identified and Inferred			
	girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and preprimary education so that they are ready for primary education	<ul> <li>financially support the family</li> <li>Addiction to drugs and negative peer group influence push the children to drop-out from school</li> <li>Number of teachers are not proportional to the total student strength, especially in government schools</li> <li>Quality of teaching is bad, teachers do not show interest in teaching and either found involvedin informal talks with other colleagues or absent</li> <li>Lower castes students face difficulty in received stipend on time</li> <li>In some instances, teacher's beahviour is foundinappropriate to girl students</li> </ul>			
Goal 5.Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere	<ul> <li>Spatial discrimination is part and parcel of social structure including school space, anganwadi, temple, hospital, playground, accessing ICDS services and likewise</li> <li>Children from Dalit communities and other lower castes (like Valmiki) are addressed in class in derogatory manner</li> <li>Girls with dark complexion are referred with disrespect</li> <li>Sometimes family members discriminate among children/girls and favour some over the other</li> <li>Girls are not allowed to attend school if the same is located far from home</li> </ul>			
Goal 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all	6.1By 2030, achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all 6.2By 2030, achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all and end open defecation, paying special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations	<ul> <li>Sufficient and safe water is unavailable in many schools due to the absence of tank or borewell in school premises</li> <li>Many schools do not have toilets whereas those have are remained locked for students.</li> </ul>			

Sustainable Development Goals	SDGs and Targets	Problems Identified and Inferred			
Goal 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries	10.2By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status	<ul> <li>SC and ST students are not given opportunity to perform in annual functions or debates</li> <li>SC, Dalit and tribal students are perceived 'untouchable' by the higher caste students and teachers- they sit separately during mid-day meal, do not use same utensils used by the higher caste, clean classroom and school premises</li> <li>Dalit workers are not given opportunity for cooking and the children are mistreated</li> </ul>			
Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable	11.7By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities	<ul> <li>Many family members do not allow girls to go out for tuition because of the fear of being eveteased by boys</li> <li>Some of the children do not feel safe in school</li> </ul>			
Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels	16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels	<ul> <li>Teachers from Dalit communities are looked down upon by the higher caste teachers</li> <li>Dalit and tribal teachers are given transfers and postings in interior areas even if they have genuine demands to go for urban posting</li> <li>Leaves applied by Dalit and tribal teachers are not sanctioned</li> <li>SMCs do not function properly, sometimes the signatures are forged while the members are not aware about their roles and responsibilities</li> </ul>			

# 4.3 Draft National Education Policy 2018: The Backdrop

As an integral part of the BJP manifesto, the Ministry of Human Resource Development of Indian government conducted a large scale collaborative consultation across grassroots, national and digital spaces for the formulation of National Education Policy (NEP) 2016. Based on 33 themes for School and Higher Education (SE and HE), the policy agenda was drafted framed to collate with people's increasing need for quality education to make the nation the powerhouse of knowledge and education hub. Government's move is centred on four pillars viz. excellence, equal access, expansion and employability.

The consultation on School Education were themed around extension of outreach of elementary, secondary and senior secondary education; strengthening vocational training courses; training of teachers for ensuring quality education; reform of examination systems; accelerating literacy in rural

locations with special emphasis on women, SCs, STs and minorities through adult education and national open schooling system; promoting information and communication technology systems in school and adult education; new knowledge, pedagogies and approaches for teaching of science, maths and technology in school education to improve learning outcomes of students; school standards, school assessment and school management systems; enabling inclusive education – education of SCs, STs, girls, minorities and children with special needs; promotion of languages; comprehensive education – ethics, physical education, arts and crafts, life skills and focus on child health.

The themes for consultation on Higher Education includes integration of skill development, improvement of the public universities, creating opportunities for digital and tech-based learning, financial support to higher education, meaningful partnership with private sectors, linking education and employability through industrial engagements, promoting research and development, creation of new knowledge and lastly reduction of zonal disparities and social gaps.

#### 4.4 Perspectives of the Ground Level Panel on the draft National Education Policy

The lived experiences shared by the GLP panellists bring in the challenges of policy implementation, thereby the gaps between aspired and achieved. But in a way, the voice raised at the grassroots helps to seek better possible paths of implementation in actual. Though the GLPs had not been designed to comment on all dimensions of NEP, the conversations have overlapped with few of its thrust areas during the sessions.

The reflections from the participants are discussed under relevant sections of School Education within the scope of the policy-

#### Section 1: Ensuring learning outcomes in elementary education

In elementary education, despite improvements in access and retention, the learning outcomes for a majority of children continue to be an area of serious concern. Studies are showing that children are not learning the basic skills during their schooling. There is a need to explore the various approaches to improve teaching—learning at the elementary stage. There is a need to understand the reasons of low learning achievement levels in elementary schooling, assess the system of Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation and suggest ways and methods of improving the learning outcomes of school children which would result in enhancing the quality of elementary education. The quality issues and determinants thereof such as ensuring availability of trained teachers, good curriculum and innovative pedagogy that impact upon learning outcomes of the children need to be addressed on priority basis.

Reflections of the participants: Instead of taking special care of the failed students for better result in future, the schools refuse to admit them if they come to know about the failure in previous class. Some shared that if they still want to go back to school, the teachers remind them of their failure.

# Section 5: Re-vamping teacher education for quality teachers

Quality of teachers has been a major cause of worry in the country and one of the basic pre requisites to improve quality. Competence of teachers and their motivation is crucial for improving the quality. Several initiatives are being taken for addressing teacher shortages, shortages of secondary school teachers in mathematics, science and languages, improving the quality of preservice teachers and in-service teachers professional development, enhancing the status of teaching as a profession, improving teachers' motivation and their accountability for ensuring learning outcomes, and improving the quality of teacher education institutions and also teacher educators.

Inspite of several efforts by the Central and State governments issues of large number of vacancies in both elementary and secondary levels, problems of untrained teachers, lack of professionalism in teacher training institutions, mismatch in training and actual classroom practices, teacher absenteeism and teacher accountability and involvement of teachers in nonteaching activities all need to be addressed.

• Reflections of the participants: The teachers are utterly disinterested to teach in class while they get busy either talking to colleagues or over phone. There is an inadequacy in the number of teachers- as in some cases, schools upto 5<sup>th</sup>standard merely have two teachers. The quality of education gets hampered when they teach both the classes in same room. The secondary schools do not have subject specific teachers. Besides inadequacy and indifference for teaching in class- the teachers discourage students by asking them- what they will do of being educated.

# Section 6: Accelerating rural literacy with special emphasis on women, SCs, STs and minorities through adult education and national open schooling system

Literacy is an integral and indispensable element of educational development. Adult education is indispensable as it supplements the efforts to enhance and sustain literacy levels through formal education. 'Saakshar Bharat' has been devised as the new variant of National Literacy Mission. The scheme seeks to further promote and strengthen adult education, specially of women, by extending educational opportunities to those adults who lack access to formal education and have crossed the standard age for receiving such education, now feel a need for learning of any type, including, literacy, basic education (equivalency to formal education), vocational education (skill development), physical and emotional development, practical arts, applied science, sports, and recreation. The scheme has been formulated with the objective of achieving 80% literacy level by 2012 at national level, by focusing on adult women literacy seeking - to reduce the gap between male and female literacy to not more than 10 percentage points. Though there have been significant gains in literacy rates, large gender, social and regional disparities in literacy levels persist. The gains in literacy levels are due to success of the adult education programmes and improvements in primary schooling. However, there is a further need to enhance the literacy levels of the socially marginalized groups and those living in rural areas through interventions of adult education programmes and open schooling systems.

• Reflections of the participants: The drop-out children usually opt for open schooling in cases of reintegration. It has been revealed by the children that teachers refuse to admit them in regular schooling, rather advise them to take admission in open school. On the other hand, few of them feel that open school does not have any 'value' in long run, thereby they discontinue from education.

# Section 9: School standards, school assessment and school management systems

There is a need to put in place a School Quality Assessment and Accreditation System to cover all aspects of school functioning, including scholastic and coscholastic domains, physical infrastructure, faculty management, school leadership, learning outcomes and satisfaction of pupils and their parents/ guardians. Better governance structures in schools striking a balance between mandating and persuading, training of district and block-level education officers as well as head teachers for better management practices, on using data to better monitor and support school performance, and to mobilise community resources and efforts to improve school performance. The local community and panchayats are not very often actively involved in school management. While Village education Committees /School Management Committees are formed in most villages, many of them do not

function effectively. It is generally believed that the village schools will function effectively only when the local community is active and participates in the functioning of the schools.

**Reflections of the participants:** The SMC members and the director should be in fixed positions so that the assessment of the primary school teachers can be properly performed and the structural suggestions for school's development can be addressed. This also leads to lesser exploitation of teachers by the education representatives. It is also the responsibility of the society to look after the status of the schools.

# Section 10: Enabling inclusive education – education of SCs, STs, girls, minorities and children with special needs

The issue of social access and equity are far too complex. While the gaps in average enrolments between disadvantaged groups like SC, ST, Muslims, girls and children with special needs and the general population have decreased, there is still a considerably large gap in learning levels with historically disadvantaged and economically weaker children having significantly lower learning outcomes. Large and growing learning gaps threaten the equity gains achieved on the enrolment front because children with lower levels of learning are more likely to drop out. In order to increase the participation of girls and other special category children, specific interventions are being made. There is a need to examine current interventions in bridging the gender and social gaps and identify focused strategies for effective inclusion. With the adoption of RTE and enormous expansion of the system, access to school education has become near universal. However, children from certain sections of the population remain unable to benefit fully from the education system despite several special measures. Many girl children are not sent to schools and even those you complete primary levels are not sent to pursue their studies at the secondary levels and colleges.

• Reflections of the participants: In few cases, the family does not allow the girls to go out for tuition which restrains them from accessing teacher's guidance. Children are even questioned by parents that why they want to study. The discrimination between boys and girls also gets reflected through the differences in accessing school text books. The students from SC, ST, Dalit and minority communities are mistreated by the teachers- like they are told to sit separately and sometimes they are punished out of the classroom. These behaviours accelerate spatial exclusion of the oppressed communities.

# 5. Demands regarding Right to Education and Accessing Educational Facilities

The demands emerged from the panels distinctly reflect that the existent National Education Policy though committed to follow its principles, has not been able to actualize the required measures. The demands have been summarized within the NPE framework-

# A. Doing away with discrimination

- Schools should be free from all kinds of discrimination based on caste, gender, religion, social networks, disability and economic condition.
- Religious discrimination has to be over in education.
- The Dalit, Muslim and lower caste students should not face discriminations from teachers and fellow mates in school when mid-day meal is served, during the use of toilets and likewise
- Schools should recruit teachers from Dalit, Muslim and other backward communities and their strength has to be increased with respect to teachers from other higher caste communities.
- Boys and girls should be given equal opportunity in sports.

# **B.** Functioning of the School Management Committee

- School Management Committee (SMC) is formed with active participation from parents, teachers and ward members. The role of SMC is to provide opinion for proper functioning of the school but that has not been the case in reality. The committee should be strengthened and its members should be well-informed about their responsibilities. It should work according to the legislations.
- The SMC members should be informed about the provisions of filing Right to Information (RTI).
- The SMC should have representatives from all demographic groups in society
- Either block or district level education representative and School Development and Monitoring Committee (SDMC) member have to be physically present in the management committee meetings.

# C. Improvisation in the school functioning system

- The textbooks should be made available at the beginning of the session.
- The books at secondary and higher secondary stages should be made available at a cheaper price
- Secondary schools should have subject-specific teachers
- The government should provide security to the students during entry and exit in schools.

#### D. Restructuring of the school syllabus

- Prevention of discrimination and measures to end discriminatory practices should be included in the school syllabus.
- The applicability of terms based on sex, caste and religion should not be included in the school syllabus.
- School syllabuses should include the contribution of Savitri Bai Phule in women's education while the same should also be acclaimed at the national level.

# E. Systematic regulation of performances

- The quality of education has to be monitored on a regular basis like the way it is done for Mid-Day Meal (MDM) service.
- Students of government schools should be regularly monitored as done in the private schools.

# F. Accountability of the teachers

- Though Government norms state the teacher-student ratio to be1:30, this is not actually
  implemented. The ratio of male and female teachers should be in balance with the ratio of
  male and female students.
- Teachers must be punctual and take interest in teaching students. They should ensure quality education as per the syllabus.
- Teacher should be responsible to ensure the learning capacity of the students according to their standards.
- Teaching should be performed in a friendly manner to avoid children's disinterest in studies.
- Teachers should take the responsibility of identifying the dropout children and the reasons pertaining to drop-outs at a large scale.
- The students should not encounter physical violence from the teachers.
- Teachers should teach and treat all the students equally.
- The teachers should be banned from consuming tobacco (khaini, gutka) within school premises.

# G. Education is the priority, not the norms of being documented

School should not ask for residential proof.

- Admission to schools should not be restricted even if the migrants are unable to provide required documents.
- Children demand for a simplified procedure of making caste certificates.

# H. Perceiving education as fundamental right and responsibility

- Educational system shouldn't be regulated by market, rather has to be seen as a social responsibility.
- According to the RTE norm, 25% reservation for children from Economically Weaker Sections should be applied in educational institutions as that of in Delhi and Maharashtra.
- Economically weaker section quota should be strictly followed in private schools.
- The schools can be opened adjacent to the settlement (specific to any community) which has the maximum enrolment of students.
- There should be special provisions for trainings of dropout children so that they can reintegrate into formal regular schooling.
- Open schools should be strengthened so that children are not forced to drop out of the education system.

# I. Dissemination of information and knowledge sharing

- School should proactively inform children about Right to Education Act and its key provisions.
- Schools should display children's rights in lucid language.
- The school should provide a clear norm of lodging complaints for discriminatory practices.

# J. Building better infrastructural facilities

- Playground and garden are essential spaces for children. The schools should provide access to children of the sports equipments.
- Adequate cleanliness is necessary for a healthy environment in school.
- Safe drinking water sources should be made available in every school.
- The set-up of the classrooms should be such that student can sit in a circular or semi-circular form.
- Each classroom in primary as well as secondary schools should contain tables and chairs for the students.
- Schools should have a separate room for the circulation of mid-day meals.

# **ANNEXURE 1: Names of the panellists**

# Janjgir, Chhattisgarh

- 1. Amarnath Bhagat
- 2. Kumari Hamina Kerkettwa
- 3. Ram ji Markam
- 4. Amna Begum
- 5. Chandra Kumari Lahre
- 6. Umesh Kumar Pradhan
- 7. Fekan Sultania
- 8. Manju Lata Kerettwa
- 9. Baby Sonbani
- 10. Subhadra Dinkar

- 11. Umar Shai Nagesh
- 12. Amrita Markam
- 13. Srimati Santoshi Markam
- 14. Babita Anil

# Ghazipur, Uttar Pradesh

- 1. Sarah Javed
- 2. Sudhir Kumar
- 3. Nirmala
- 4. Guria Paswan
- 5. Radheshyam Rao
- 16.

- 6. Manju Devi
- 7. Ramabtar
- 8. Rajkumari Devi
- 9. Poonam Devi
- 10. Atwari Devi

- 11. Sriram Bharti
- 12. Arvind Kumar
- 13. Vindhyachal Ram
- 14. Sonu Kumar
- 15. Khan Ahmed Javed

#### New Delhi (2017)

- 1. Areeba
- 2. Armani
- 3. Aman
- 4. Ashish
- 5. Azad

- 6. Bharat
- 7. Bhawani
- 8. Ekta
- 9. Karan
- 10. Manjoor

- 11. Sanjana
- 12. Shoaib Akhtar
- 13. Shivani

# Patna, Bihar

- 1. Gangia Devi
- 2. Mamta Kumari
- 3. Surendra Kumar
- 4. Mukesh Majhi
- 5. Md. Asraf Rahman
- 6. Rehana Khatun

- 7. Farhat Parveen
- 8. Ummedani Khatun
- 9. Ritu Kumari
- 10. Sanjana Kumari
- 11. Vikas Kumar
- 12. Brajesh Majhi

- 13. Anjali Kumari
- 14. Gayatri Devi
- 15. Anshu Kumar
- 16. Sangeeta Kumari

# Keonjhar and Dhenkanal, Odisha

- 1. Subhankar Murmu
- 2. Arati Naik
- 3. Rupashree Jenas
- 4. Mukuban Naik
- 5. Damayanti Das
- 6. Nrusing Ch Mallick
- 7. Prahallad Naik
- 8. Kamala Sahu

- 9. Ajit Mallick
- 10. Rajeeb Majhi
- 11. Biren Kumar Naik

#### New Delhi (2018)

- 1. Aman
- 2. Samiel
- 3. Harshit
- 4. Chanchal
- 5. Kaial
- 6. Lalita

- 7. Chanchal Kumari
- 8. Dwivek
- 9. Nikhil
- 10. Priyanka
- 11. Aditya
- 12. Indrajeet

- 13. Sawan
- 14. Sonu
- 15. Daksh
- 16. Vikas