Exploring Possibilities: Good practices from KGBV
This initiative is supported by Shiksha Save the Children Sarv Shiksha Abhiyan and Sandhan

Publication: Oct 2012

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The Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) scheme launched by the Government of India in August 2004, aims to ensure access and quality education to the girls from disadvantaged groups of society by setting up residential schools with boarding facilities at elementary level. The schools are ‘fully government schools’. But the KGBV scheme is special. It offers three years of residential education with many more facilities as compared to the regular day schools, thus providing an opportunity for engaging in the larger agenda of Comprehensive Quality Education. Although the context is of extreme deprivation as far as the background of girls is concerned – the possibilities for both girls and teachers to manifest their immense potential are great because of the additional investment in terms of resources. What is required is the energy of teachers and functionaries to do things with a ‘difference’.

Sandhan is working with twenty Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas (KGBVs) as an Academic Resource Agency in Rajasthan. This includes six KGBVs schools of Ajmer district Rajasthan, supported by Save the Children. It has been our belief that ‘additionalities’ are required to optimize the outcomes of the KGBV scheme. This includes concerted efforts of motivating teachers and girls to explore new possibilities. Some demonstrative efforts are required to generate faith in the process of change. This has been Sandhan’s basic approach of facilitating additionalities in the KGBVs.

Sandhan’s efforts in promoting Comprehensive and Quality Education in the KGBVs of Ajmer are being channelized through specific strategies. These are activating Meena Manch, use of library books in teaching learning processes, Newsletters, systematizing games and organizing exposure visits as educational experience. We are calling these strategies as good practises as these have the potential to transform and energize all those who are associated with them.

After working for a year with the KGBVs in Ajmer, Sandhan was keen to assess whether things are really changing. For this during our visits to the KGBVs, we interacted with both girls and teachers, to understand as to whether these efforts have at all brought any changes in their lives and if so, their perceptions and feelings regarding these changes. These interactions generated a pattern of changes which is being shared in the following narrative.

Sandhan’s Role

The ‘Additionalities’ provided by Sandhan in these six KGBVs involve:

• Understanding the specificity of girls, taking the individual as the unit of perception. Almost all KGBV girls have a commonality when they arrive in KGBV. They have a limited but a strong worldview of their own. They are oblivious of the fast changing world outside. They are all at different levels of learning competencies. Sandhan’s role, therefore, is to
  – Identify their strengths and understanding.
  – Assess their learning levels in a systematic manner.
  – Evolve a multi-level teaching strategy, keeping in view their conceptual strengths.

This process which is new to the teachers is shared and communicated to them; so that it becomes an ongoing process. It is envisaged that the need for hand holding will gradually diminish.

• Capacity building of SSA functionaries, teachers and head teachers for understanding
  – The KGBV scheme and its focus.
  – Their role in building learning environment and practices. This includes planning, multilevel teaching techniques, use of multiple texts, library, addressing health issues and creative aspects such as music, dance, drawing, theatre as a part of the curriculum.

• Continued onsite support to the schools (monthly three day visit to the KGBVs) as a follow up of teachers’ training. This includes:
  – Demonstrative training in multilevel pedagogy in a constructivist mode supported by systematic academic planning.
  – Efforts to bring centre stage use of multiple texts and library are a part of this exercise.
  – Optimizing residentiality and potential of scheme in all aspects, including demonstration of integrating creativity – music, dance, arts with academics.
  – Weaving in Life Skill Education and gender issues in the overall KGBV environment.

THE SANDHAN TEAM
Meena Manch is a forum inspired by the animation series of 'Meena' produced by UNICEF to promote rights of the girl child. Girls at KGBV transact the Meena stories and then enacting them as role plays. This has demonstrated powerful impact in terms of involving girls, eliciting their participation and positively shaping the attitude and behaviour of girls at KGBV. The involvement of girls through Meena Manch has witnessed transformation of coy introvert girls into bold and expressive individuals who relate to the issues being raised through the Meena Manch with their personal experience, immersing in the role enacted as if it is their own story.

The bubbly and wise Meena has become the role model for many girls. She inspires girls and guides them in their action. Girls want to be like her: confident, wise and heard of. Originally started with an idea of spreading awareness on female literacy and education in the community, the concept of Meena Manch is now being widely used, not only to raise and understand issues pertaining to the life of girls which affect them adversely but also as a tool to enhance girls' participation and empower them towards decision and action.

Issues raised through the Meena books are the everyday reality of the girls and teachers. Meena herself is a character representative of the girls in KGBV or for that matter the childhood of many of the teachers as well, and this is where the bond lies. These books have enabled them to step out of stereotypes and make action images. Transaction of the Meena books are followed by role plays. Most girls want to be an active member of the play. Their desire is to be in the role of Meena, see themselves as confident, problem solving individuals.

During the role plays girls link up their issues with the existing social scenario. The superimposed and the self imposed subordinated role in this patriarchal society disturb the girls as they begin to reflect. As the understanding dawns that gender roles are social constructs, they make an attempt to inquire as to what is ‘right’ and what is ‘wrong’ and why?. A relook into the Meena books makes one realize that these could be used as a tool for nurturing and strengthening the life skills among girls. The Meena books have also provided an exposure to the girls to diverse ways of drawing, painting, use of colours and aesthetics at large!

Interactions with girls in KGBV and feedback on the Meena Manch have made it clear that these activities have gone beyond merely adding to the entertainment quotient. These activities have actually impacted the articulations and expressions of girls. When the girls enact the stories through role plays, they improvise dialogues and express their thoughts, sometimes in Hindi and sometimes in the local language. Their expression tends to impart another dimension to the role plays and eventually to the Meena concept. Meena has become dear to every girl’s heart in KGBV. Her name brings a smile on every girl face. Girls feel that their manifest which have remained dormant is perceptible in Meena. Every Meena story reflects the struggle which the girls face in their own life. Whenever Meena is able to come up with solution related to her rights or can confidently negotiate her position in the family and society at large, her sense of achievement is shared by the girls in spirit.

“I enjoy the Meena stories and feel happy to be associated with Meena. Initially I did not have the confidence to express my thoughts even among my peer groups. But now I feel confident enough to express my views in the group.”
Kali Gurjar
Class VII, KGBV Kiraap

“I adore Meena. I find her Samajhdaar (wise). She takes decisions after dwelling on the pros and cons. She is bold but not rash. I want to be like her.”
Mansaur
KGBV Arain

“Why this differentiation between girls and boys. We can do all the work done by the boys.”
Durga
KGBV Tabiji

* Meena stories have been developed by UNICEF

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Unfolding Potential: Meena Manch

“The process of enacting the Meena story often does not need any prompting from teachers and this is what amazes me.”

Meena Mertia
Teacher, KGBV Tabiji

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Shobha from KGVB Tabiji in Ajmer can read now. Her father on knowing this, was elated. He distributed sweets and thanked the teachers in KGBV. His happiness and gratitude was overwhelming. Shobha gleamed as she shared her story with the Sandhan team.

Fourteen years old Shobha was studying in government school in class seven before she came to KGBV. She had repeated Standard five twice and in this school. Despite difficult economic conditions at home, her father was keen to educate her. He therefore got her admitted to a private school for two years. However, despite eight years of schooling, Shobha could not even read a sentence correctly.

Remembering the past days Shobha elaborated — “I had lost interest in studies as I could not read and write. In class when we were asked to stand up and read from the book, I used to feel ashamed. I could not read a single sentence whereas my friends in the same class could read it easily.

After coming to KGBV, we were introduced to lots of books brought by Sandhan. These books were simple with colorful pictures and easy to read words. With the help of my teachers and friends I started developing interest in books. Touching them, feeling them and enjoying being with them, I got fresh energy. Now, I have read almost ten to twelve books and will be happy to tell you stories from them. Now I can proudly say that I can read my curriculum books as well as books from the library. I wish my friends from previous school could see my reading and writing skills.”

The teacher: Rekha Sharma’s feedback on Shobha was also very encouraging “When she came to KGBV she was shy, timid and not able to read. Today we see her as a confident class representative, who actively participates in all activities and has improved tremendously in her reading and writing skills.”

After receiving interesting lively books the very concept of library has gone through a major change. Six months back, it was a
different scene. Teachers and students of KGBVs were oblivious to the existence of the library. A teacher revealed that books in the library were way beyond the reading standards of the girls, so teachers never bothered to take them out.

Earlier, the teachers were always scared that once they give the books to the girls, they would be damaged, which is why the books were kept under lock and key. There was no inspiration and effort even by the teachers to read these books or use these as a means of teaching or discussions. Girls too felt that the books were beyond their reach, so never sought after them. It did not interest and excite them.

The journey of reinterpreting the use of library began with the arrival of bright, colourful, attractive ‘easy to read’ books from Pratham and Bharat Gyan Vigyan Samiti (BGVS) in Ajmer KGBVs. The idea was to bring the library books in the classroom, generate excitement and an attraction for books among girls as well as teachers and use them in the teaching and learning processes.

This process has encouraged the girls to imbibe an enquiring attitude and teamwork, develop analytical and communication skills, creative thinking and express through art, poems etc. These are evident in the newsletters created by them. The library intervention has been effectively implemented in all Ajmer KGBVs. As an impact varying degree of positive changes are visible in the girls in KGBV. Introduction of simple and colourful books through the libraries has made all the difference.

Sandhan’s perspective towards holistic education includes a breakthrough from the conservative approach of learning which is limited to text books. Learning in a larger dimension that goes beyond the curricular books, exploring diverse avenues has encouraged accelerated pace of learning and internalizing behavioral skills. ‘Bringing the library in the classroom’ has emerged as an effective medium for Comprehensive Education.

“We circulate books and share stories with each other. Now we are confident in doing role plays and presentation on the theme of these books. We practice writing poems and stories after reading. It does help us to improve our hand writing and drawings.”

Pooja & Archana
Class VII, KGBV Tabiji

“We like reading stories, poems, jokes and puzzles. These books are simple and easy to comprehend. The colors in the books, enthuse me to draw and paint. Can you get more books, I like reading them. You were right; these books are great friends.”

Madhu
Class VIII, KGBV Tabiji

“We like reading stories, poems, jokes and puzzles. These books are simple and easy to comprehend. The colors in the books, enthuse me to draw and paint. Can you get more books, I like reading them. You were right; these books are great friends.”

Savita
Class VI, KGBV Tabiji
Newsletter ‘Baatcheet’: Reinterpreting Teaching Learning Material

A feature introduced in KGVB is the quarterly newsletter ‘Baatcheet’ which is in great demand at the KGVBs. Girls want to have a copy of it as soon it is printed. They take great interest in reading this. Sandhan initiated the newsletter exercise three years back in KGVBs of Udaipur & Tonk. Encouraged by success of this exercise, Sandhan decided to scale this and provide an exposure to girls in Ajmer. The views of girls from other districts created an excitement in teachers also. Coloured photocopies of all published editions of newsletters of Tonk and Udaipur were distributed in all six KGVBs of Ajmer. This initial step created a magic!

Girls read the news letters cover to cover. They read it on their own, read it aloud to their friends, and expressed their opinion on what was already written. Personal thoughts and experiences locked up within themselves due to diffidence and low self esteem suddenly opened a new horizon. The idea of having their own newsletter appealed to them immensely. They created original stories, poems, personal opinion write up, and drawings. Our bags began to overflow. The results excited us. The Newsletters had made their mark. They proved instrumental in developing thinking abilities and skills in expression among the girls.

Newsletter are now shared regularly, providing a platform for girls to participate actively in discussions, sharing their opinions, speaking with confidence.

In retrospect we find the change very perceptible – specially when we think of situation when Sandhan began working in KGVB.
An Earlier Scene from the KGVB in Oct 2011, and one from later, in July 2012

A baseline exercise is being conducted in the KGVB. Girls are seated in rows, with a worksheet in their hand. The sheet contains the following paragraph: “One day Nagma and her brother Aman went to the bazaar. Aman saw a ‘khomchewala’ frying snack balls ‘pakoras’. They looked attractive bubbling in the hot oil. Aman was tempted to eat them. Nagma cautioned Aman that they would be hot and spicy. Aman did not heed to Nagma’s caution and ate the pakoras. His eyes started watering and tears flowed.”

Girls had to read the paragraph, and respond to the given questions; so that their learning levels could be assessed.

One of the questions was: Tumhe khane mein kya pasand hai ? (What do you like to eat?)

Girls wrote their answers and handed over the copies to the teacher. They neither looked excited nor happy. What did the girls write?

What emerged shook us up. All of them had written the same answer ... ‘Khomcha’. We were baffled as to how and why all answers were identical. How could their choice be so very uniform? What was the barrier that was preventing the girls to express their own personal choice of eatables? A look into their home work copy had the key to this puzzle. All their answers were uniform, copied from the guide books. The written expression was confined to their text books to such an extent; that they had begun believing that all answers have to be from the text books.

Even for expressing to their personal choice in food, they ‘looked’ for the answer from the book in the given paragraph and came up with the answer ‘Khomcha’. They did not know the meaning of ‘Khomcha’, but that did not matter. They just thought that whatever is given in the book is the correct answer. We realized that concerted efforts have to be made to enable girls become more open and expressive. The challenge was to create an environment where every girl could get away from stereotype answers and this required working with teachers who were approving of these stereotypes.

We questioned ourselves. What are Teaching Learning Materials?

Are they the frames of pictures, maps hung up high on the walls of the KGVB with which neither students nor teachers work; or the paintings of quotes, mathematical formulas, geometrical figures, concepts of science like water cycle painted on the wall? These become so obvious and a part of the daily routine that nobody cares to give them a second look. Or are they the costly ready made items available in the market?

The activity of news letter redefined the meaning of Teaching Learning Material. Materials that facilitate and promote learning; breaking the habit of rote; creating a lively inquiring learning environment are teaching learning material. The newsletters have succeeded in making a dent in the rusty habit of rote learning.

A present scene from the same KGVB in July 2012 says it all for itself:

Girls are sitting in small groups and working. They are engrossed! The ambience is vibrant and buzzing with energy. Girls have newsletters in their hands. As they read they are also into a lively discussions...

Tara: “I watch Navya and Jhansi Ki Rani. Both these serials are fascinating. I am not able to see these serials at home. We do not have a dish antennae.”

Chanda: “I admire Pratigya (from the TV serial Pratigya). She is educated, honest and abides by the law.”

We encourage a few others to also contribute to the discussion.
Dhanni: “I study in class VIII. I have five siblings. Four sisters and one brother. My brother studies in a kind of school where the yearly fees amount to Rs 40000, while, I have been admitted to KGBV. Why separate school arrangements?”

Shobha: “I was studying in class V in a Primary school where a boy fought with me and then held my hand. In an effort to free myself I bit his hand. The matter reached up to the head teacher. The teacher instead of scolding the boy, for his misbehavior, rebuked me. I was warned as not to pick up fight with boys in future.”

As girls discuss, one can sense that girls are not just expressing their opinion but are raising issues which hurt them deeply; concerns that are deep rooted in the discrimination and the inferior positions that are accorded to women.

As girls read and chat a few are immersed in writing. Their expressions seemed to be brimming with self esteem, confidence.

Sangita writes: “I have started liking KGBV. After joining KGBV I have become sincere in my studies. I have been entrusted with the responsibility of the stores and its stocks. I am now aware of exactly what quantities of materials are required for hundred girls. Every day after handing over the raw food items from the store to the cook, I make an entry in the register. I had never imagined that one day I would learn to do these kind of school management related work and do it well. I have learnt sewing and currently learning the beauticians’ course. I am confident, that I will pass with flying colours.”

Lalita writes: “When I joined KGBV, I did not know how to write and read but now I do. I have also learnt to dance and do theatre, I play many games specially kadabbi is my favorites. I enjoy these and love to do them. I can now do small repair works like changing the plug pin, minor problems related to the inverter. Once the mechanic came to repair the water cooler I observed him closely. Next time the same problem occurred, I set the cooler right and actually saved the mechanic charges. Today I see myself as a responsible individual.”

Such expressions are not just confined to one or two girls. There are many girls who have lots to share. They have not only sharpened their tools of thought, but have become competent in diverse ways of expressing themselves.

This is the present scenario, which energizes all of us. But every present has a past that is often pushed into oblivion. It is important that we understand it, because it is this past that has informed the present.

Girls have come a long way from writing stereotype leave applications in dated formats. Today their writings reflect originality and freshness. They are able to put their point across, but with subtleness. A letter from Srinagar to Tabiji says it all.

A letter for Tabiji

Dear Friends

How are you all? It has been long since we last met. First of all we would like to thank you all for our food arrangements. It was praise worthy. It was a treat and pleasure to see all my KGBV friends in the sports event. We acknowledge the sporting spirit that we all demonstrated in our game. All of us played a fair game!

We do not have a sports ground in our KGBV. Whenever you all come for sports, we take you all to the sports ground, which is at some distance away from our school. This is of inconvenience for you as well as us. We regret this inconvenience.

In the sports event, both our teams had won jointly; were awarded a joint rolling shield. It was agreed that the shield would be in each of our school for six months. The time period of first six months gets completed on May 15, 2012. We would now like to have the shield in our school.

Eagerly waiting, for your response.

Your friends from KGBV Srinagar.
हमारे विचार
Games can be fun as well as learning experience. Sandhan’s effort to promote regular games activities in the KGVB has brought about substantial changes in the behavior and learning of the girls. Prior to Sandhan’s planned and regular intervention to promote games activity as a learning and development tool, the games period in the KGVB were not organized. Girls did play, but not all girls were collectively involved. Few girls played in small groups playing indigenous games, some girls used the time to chat. Teachers used this time for their personal work. The available sport equipments and kits in KGVB’s, were kept inside the ‘boxes’ for the fear of breakage of material. Teachers did not see it as a strategic base for Comprehensive Education.

As Sandhan started an attempt to reorganize and effectively use the play time, the teachers got along and were supportive. They too agreed that games are mediums for defreezing and ensuring retention in schools and most of them had warmed up to the idea of systematizing the games and sports time of the school.

The games periods were organized around playing games which were indigenous and for which the sports kit, play materials were available. Regularity of organizing the period, choice of games, involvement of the larger group, laid down principles of playing the games, disciplining, team work, and sportsmanship development became regular feature in promoting this. It helps the freshly enrolled girls to get accustomed and adjust with the school environment. They get to know each other, make friends and emerge as a team.

KGBV Arain – An experience

KGBV Arain has enough space for girls to play. During the maintenance of the school building in the beginning of the session 2011-2012, the waste materials were dumped in the playground. As a consequence it provided the girls little ground to play.

Once the problem was identified, the Sandhan team discussed the issue with the teachers and students on the various options to clear the playground. Teachers suggested that there is a need to hire laborers to clear the playground. But the KGBV girls expressed their sense of ownership towards their school and decided to take up the cleaning work of the ground. With enthusiasm girls divided themselves into groups and cleared the entire playground within a few hours. This productive exercise by girls resulted in a suitable playground.

Games have opened up opportunities for girls which they seldom thought that it existed. Playing games which were seen in TV and played by boys has boosted up their confidence immensely and has been helpful in developing the winning spirit and attitude. Physical activity has boosted their health and stamina. Girls look forward to this time and exhibit ownership and leadership to further promote play activity.

“I enjoy playing Kho-Kho. As I run very fast and nobody can catch me. I also want to learn the games that boys play as cricket and volleyball.”

Aachuki
Class VI, KGBV Khatoli

“Prior to KGBV, I used to play at home. But here it is more fun playing with lots of girls. I feel like playing all the time.”

Suman Choudhary
Class VIII, KGBV Arain
Exposure Visit: An Educational Experience

Established in 1972, the Barefoot College is a non-government organisation that has been providing basic services and solutions to problems in rural communities, with the objective of making them self-sufficient and sustainable. These ‘barefoot solutions’ can be broadly categorised into solar energy, water, education, health care, rural handicrafts, people’s action, communication, women’s empowerment and wasteland development. The college believes that any rural development activity to be successful and sustainable, it must be based in the village as well as managed and owned by those whom it serves.

The KGBV scheme is specially designed for education of the most marginalized girls of the age group 11-14, who are either dropouts from regular schools or have ‘missed the bus’. It has all the components inbuilt to facilitate Comprehensive Education. The component of exposure visit is one among them. During our interaction with KGBV teachers and students, we realized that this has been limited to just a visit. The approach of teachers was to ‘complete’ a given agenda. The challenge was to explore possibilities to convert exposure trips to an educational experience.

As we discussed on this issue, we started exploring destinations where there were such possibilities. The Barefoot College (SWRC Tilonia) emerged as a favourable option since it was in Ajmer district. We in Sandhan felt that the approach on which Barefoot College Tilonia was founded would be inspirational for both teachers and students. Also most of the teachers and students did not know much about it and had not visited it. The procurement of solar lamps from Tilonia set the stage rolling, enthusing the girls to know and see how they were made. It seemed more interesting and reassuring to the girls as most of them did not like darkness and some of them were scared of it, particularly when there were power cuts in KGBV which were quite frequent.

The utility of the solar lamps and its handiness made the Tilonia visit very popular with the girls as it was very close to their everyday life.

Head teachers across all six KGBVs in Ajmer district were eager to organize the visit to Barefoot College – SWRC Tilonia.

After the visits, teammates from Sandhan held discussions with teachers and students in each school to get a feel of their perceptions about the visit. To understand whether the visit was like any other trip, or was inspiring for teachers and students. What might have been catalyst for inspiration? The pattern that emerged was fairly similar across all KGBVs. However in this write up the focus is on the dialogue which we had with teachers and students of KGBV Srinagar (Ajmer, Rajasthan). Head teacher Usha ji, Teacher Shyama ji and girls of class VI, VII and VIII were present in the discussion.

Anindita (Sandhan): As teachers, in what aspect do you think this trip has been different from the exposure visits which happen every year?

Usha ji and Shyama ji: “The aspect of planning in details and approach to organize the visit was very good. The process of selection of the visit destination Tilonia, and sharing of the barefoot approach with us in advance was helpful and inspiring. All of us were eagerly awaiting the visit. Planning was an important aspect. Planning, not in a manner that was merely confined to logistical arrangements, but that which involved preparedness of girls, regarding what all they would see and probable questions that could be asked. Girls who had strong articulation skills were identified. Those who could sing well or articulate well prepared small ‘talk’ about their KGBV and also songs for presenting in the community radio programme of SWRC Tilonia.”

“Experience, travel – these are education in themselves…”

Euripides, Greek playwright (480BCE–406BCE)

“The preparations which we had done before going to Tilonia, like dividing ourselves into groups, writing down the probable questions which we would ask, helped us to be attentive! Hum trip mein dhyani diye!”

Basanti
Class VIII, KGBV Khatouli

“Before going to Tilonia, we were wondering as to what we would see. We were also recollecting our Udaipur visit where we had fun; we saw the lakes and palaces. But we did not do any preparations like we did for Tilonia visit: preparing for talk in the radio, dividing ourselves into groups, writing down questions which were very useful.”

Kiran Ravat
Class VII, KGBV Khatouli
Iram(Sandhan): What kind of questions did you prepare and ask?

“How much does the solar cooker cost? How long does it take to boil water and what quantity? How do they manufacture a solar lamp? How much have they studied? Where did they get this training? How does one maintain the solar cookers? If the mirrors get broken or damaged how it would be repaired? How do you communicate with women of other countries when you do not know their language and they do not know Hindi?”

Rekha
Class VIII, KGBV Khatouli

“Of course I met with women who had come from Ethiopia in Africa. They looked different from us and their language was different too. They had come to Tilonia to learn to make solar lamps. We could only say ‘Hi’ and not communicate further because of language barrier. I wanted to stay there for some more time. Whenever I heard about Videshi log, or saw photos in the newspaper, I drew an image of fair skin people like ‘angrezlog’. But for the first time when I saw women from Ethiopia and Fiji, I realized that not all foreigners are white in colour. Their skin colour was dark, very curly hair, but good looking. I was amazed, I asked Shyama madam about them. I came to know that those who are not from Europe mahadesh, are not all white. Some of them are brown like us and even darker than us.”

Rekha Yogi
Class VIII, Srinagar

“‘The women who were working in solar units have inspired me. I keep on thinking that if they, who have not studied much can do such work, I am studying in KGBV and want to study further and work like them.’

Farzana
Class VI, KGBV Kiraap

“We had just received solar lamps in our school. In Tilonia we saw how these lamps are made. We attentively heard the do’s and don’ts of maintenance of the lamps. The solar panel of our school is not functional. Our teachers wanted to know about it. The Sir in Tilonia said that technician can come to our school and see as to what is wrong with the solar panel.”

Rekha Bambhi
Class VII, KGBV Shrinagar
Iram: “Please share some of your impressions, something about the visit which you will remember for long time.”

“The puppets, using them as medium for communication on issues of our life!”

“I never thought that I would be able to speak about my KGBV in the radio. But once I started talking, words came in a flow. I too had prepared. I felt confident of myself after this event.”

Shakuntala ji
KGBV Srinagar

This was the first time I was singing in radio. I was nervous initially. But as soon as I began to sing, I was comfortable. Now I am confident that I can sing in front of a radio.”

Rekha
Class VIII, Srinagar

“Once we reached Tilonia, it was a new world for me and others too. Not only did we see but we also learnt how to utilize old boxes, cut pieces of cloth to make utility boxes for our use. Use of news papers to make news paper bags, fun caps.”

Pinky Jat

Anindita: Did you present your talk in the radio? Please tell us something about the radio experience?

“This was the first time I was singing in radio. I was nervous initially. But as soon as I began to sing, I was comfortable. Now I am confident that I can sing in front of a radio.”

Rekha
Class VIII, Srinagar

“I spoke in the radio about my KGBV. I wanted my parents to hear my voice. I was feeling happy that my voice and name will be heard by many people.”

Puja
Class VIII, Srinagar

Girls of Class VII, VI – Kiran Ravat, Mamta Papiiya, Madina, Lalita Gurjar, Manju Jat collectively contributed in this write up.
Solar Cooker Campaign

Girls of class VIII have drawn up comparative cost analysis and how the solar cookers are contributing to protection of environment:

“The solar cooker is cost effective and environment friendly. We use fuel wood for lighting our earthen stoves. For fuel wood we cut trees from the neighboring forest areas. This is harmful for the environment. If this practice continues, a time will come when the land will be barren and there will be no rains. Even there would be shortage of oxygen. Our parents too need to see through this and understand the usefulness of using a solar cooker. There is no need to procure gas or cut down trees for fuel wood or use cow dung fuel. The cow dung can be used as manure in the fields. The environment remains protected and gets enriched!

In our house, there is consumption of the following fuels items and their cost comes to:

Kerosene 50x30=Rs.1500
Wood Rs. 500 rough estimation
Gas = Rs.300
Cost of preparing an earthen stove = Rs.100

Upon considering the cost of kerosene, then the yearly cost stands up to:
50x30=Rs. 1500 (cost per month)
1500x12= Rs. 18000 (cost per annum)

Cost of procuring solar cooker= 13000
18000 - 13000 = Rs 5000: Money Saved

Considering that cost of buying the solar cooker is one time, the solar cooker emerges as a cost effective environment friendly option.

The discussions were lively. We did not have to urge any girl to speak. Each one of them was competing with the other to share their thoughts. Those who were not very vocal in the large group were seen prompting their peers with facts. After this visit, girls came up with creative drawings, writings about the visit which were put up on display board and covered in the news letters.

Travelling to a different place away from where one lives is more than seeing sights. It is a change that goes on deep, in the ideas of ‘living’. exposure visits, excursions, educational tours, however we name it, are all ways to explore, widen ones horizons of experience and knowledge.

Farzana and Basanti
Class VIII

“Tilonia is a learning experience. If one wants many things can be done. Ajmer mein rahkar bhi etne salon mein pahli baar Tilonia visit pe aayi. Maine eisi jagah pahale naahi dekh thi. Chahen to bahut kuch kar sakte hain.”

Head Teacher
KGBV Srinagar

Anindita: Does any of you want to share anything about the visit that has not come up till now?

“Had we stayed at home we would have never got this opportunity to see these things. Here in KGBV we are lucky to get exposure to diverse things. Moreover now that we know about Tilonia, after completing our studies we can go there, take part in trainings and be able to earn for ourselves. Agar hum ghar par rahte to yeh sab hume kabhii dekhte ko hi nahi milti. KGBV mein hume yah mauka mil raha hein. KGBV mein padhkar, Tilonia se training leker hum rozgaar kar sakte hain.”

Farzana and Basanti
Class VIII

“Tilonia is a learning experience. If one wants many things can be done. Ajmer mein rahkar bhi etne salon mein pahli baar Tilonia visit pe aayi. Maine eisi jagah pahale naahi dekh thi. Chahen to bahut kuch kar sakte hain.”

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