



'Our Children, Our School'

**3 days' Training Module for School Management Committee (SMC)
in the light of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009**

Graphic Associates 11-10



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Preface

Our Children Our School

The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RCFCE) Act, 2009 has emphasized the need for restructuring and strengthening School Management Committee (SMC) for effective school development and management. As per the Act, every school receiving support from the government at elementary level will constitute SMCs. The most important feature of the SMC's composition is the stress laid on the participation of the community including members from disadvantaged groups, teachers, Panchayat functionaries and teachers. Realising the importance of women in the education of children, it has been prescribed that half of the members have to women.

West Bengal has a rich history of community participation in education and school development and even under the SSA the community's involvement has been significant especially in the areas of creation of child friendly environments, enrolment of children, health checkups, timely distribution of teaching learning materials, management of mid-day meals, organizing cultural activities for children from time to time, etc. However, there is still a need for further strengthening the ongoing school community partnership to ensure child friendly child centered processes in and around schools.

It is envisioned that the SMCs will be active in the following areas :

1. **Universal Access** : This would include identification of out of school children and to take steps for their enrolment in the nearby school. Special provisions also need to be made for children with special needs and those from disadvantaged communities. Such children would need special training to become at par with other children of their age.
2. **Quality** : Ensuring that the schools teaching learning processes remain child friendly and child centered with special attention for children from disadvantaged communities and background so that every child participates in the activities and learns happily.
3. **Designing School Development Plans** for three years with year wise break up of activities.
4. **Monitoring working of the school, effective fund utilization.**

“Our Children Our School” is a module touching upon all the aspects of SMC capacity building in the present context, which attempts to make the community members realise that they carry enormous learning resources for children based on their years of experience and expertise that can be tapped for the cause of their education. It also familiarizes the members with the emerging role and functions of SMC under the RCFCE Act. It also seeks to provide them a series of ideas and insights on how they can work for Whole School development for Whole Child development. The module has been based on the belief that every school has the potential to flourish as child friendly centers for children. This module has attempted to illustrate this through the series of posters developed with this training module.

The development of this training package would not have become a reality without the efforts of a lot of people. I am grateful to Mr. Binay Pattanayak, Education Specialist, UNICEF for his guidance throughout the entire process. My gratitude is due to the members of the State Resource Team in particular and to the PBSSM team in general for working so hard to make this Module a reality. Thank are also due to UNICEF for supporting in this collaboration. I would also be failing in my duty if I did not acknowledge the constant support and guidance received from Shri Vikram Sen IAS, Secretary School Education Department, Government of West Bengal.

I sincerely hope that SMC members and teachers in every school go through this rich resource pack and reflect the learning in their practices related to school development and management.



State Project Director
Paschim Banga Sarva Shiksha Mission

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Rationale

Community everywhere carries enormous potential for providing safe, secure and meaningful learning opportunities to children. However, majority of schools fail to realise the high potential of community in extending tremendous learning opportunities to children by welcoming them as active and equal partners in school development and management processes.

The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act (commonly known as the RTE Act, 2009) interprets the community's role in school development in a dynamic manner by urging the schools to welcome them as partners. Going few steps beyond community participation as done under the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), the RTE Act emphasises on the need for restructuring and strengthening School Management Committee at school level. MHRD's national survey undertaken through the National University of Educational Planning and Administration (NUEPA) in 14 states, to make an assessment of the functioning of these Committees in school management and supervision in the selected states, indicates that for enhancing the community participation in SSA, committees such as VECs, SDMCs, PTAs, etc. have been set up in every state. Efforts are made for involvement of these committees in the management and supervision of elementary education under SSA. SSA provides for capacity building of the committee members to an extent. The said study attempted to reflect the following aspects of community mobilization under SSA.

- To study policies and procedures regarding formation and composition of the committees.
- To examine the expected and actual roles and functions of the committees.
- To study initiatives towards capacity building of the committee members
- To study monitoring mechanisms of the committees.
- To suggest measures for effective functioning of the committees

The study found out 9 types of committees in the selected states.

Nomenclature	States
Village Education Committee (VEC)	Maharashtra, West Bengal, Jharkhand, Haryana, Uttarakhand, Mizoram and Nagaland
Parent Teacher Association (PTA)	MP, Kerala and Delhi
School Development and Monitoring Committee (SDMC)	Karnataka
School Development Management Committee (SDMC)	Rajasthan

Nomenclature	States
Panchayat Education Committee (PEC)	Kerala
School Management Committee (SMC)	Uttarakhand
Village Education Development Committee (VEDC)	Punjab
Vidyalaya Kalyan Samiti (VKS)	Delhi
Vidyalaya Shiksha Samittee (VSS)	Bihar

Also it found out that such committees operate at different levels: school level, village level and Panchayat level.

Level of Committee	States
School level	Karnataka, Rajasthan, Bihar, M.P., Kerala, Delhi, Uttarakhand
Village level	Jharkhand, Punjab, Haryana, Mizoram, Nagaland
Panchayat level	Kerala and Uttarakhand

The study has found that three states have more than one committee. Two States have committees both at school and Panchayat levels. Norms of constituting these committees (size, representation and their tenure) also varies from each other significantly. In the capacity building programmes only 37% participants have reported to have taken part! More than 50% state reports indicated weak linkage of these committees with Panchayati Raj Institutions. Similarly although structural linkages of these committees with BEO, DPO, SPO was observed in majority of states for administrative purposes, however the functional linkages was found to be weak in most states. Academic links with CRC, BRC and NGOs was also found to be weak! Committees also have indicated the following as the major constraints: lack of interest, irregular attendance in meetings, lack of co-operation and coordination among the members, lack of support from authority, lack of adequate and regular training, politicization of members, inadequate funds, lack of authority to take action, etc.

Major issues pointed out by the state reports include the following.

- Legal provisioning for community participation is weak in most states.
- Quality of education and overall development of the school is one of the main challenges before the committees.



- Capacity building of the members is far from adequate.
- A functional linkage of the Committees with PRI/local bodies is quite weak, even where structural linkages exist.
- People's participation in school management in urban areas is a complex issue which needs to be treated separately through different strategies.

The study has recommended the following for strengthening and restructuring the School Management Committees.

- Formulate legislative measures to accord a statutory status
- Larger representation of parents.
- Associating students of higher classes as members.
- Selection of parent members through election.
- Nominated members should include PRI representatives (in case of no linkage), AW workers, Educated youth, Health worker, former students.
- 15 to 20 members in the committee with proportionate representation special focus groups (SC, ST, etc.) and minimum 33% women.
- Tenure of the Committees from 3 to 5 years matching with the PRI tenure; at least 1/3rd to be retained year to year, to ensure continuity.
- Roles and functions of the Committee members should be clearly articulated with focus overall development of school with focus on equity and quality.
- Some incentives should be given for participation to the committee members in school activities.
- Untied fund should be made available to the committee for innovative activities.
- All committee members should be provided adequate training about their expected roles and functions. Adequate funds should be made for such training
- There should be effective convergence and collaboration with other partners at the local, block and district levels.
- There should be greater transparency and accountability in the functioning of the committee.



This module has attempted to look at each issue as identified by the study and also has referred to each recommendation while designing a road map for the School Management Committees. It foresees that it is going to be a challenging issue as the system needs to look at Community based School Management instead of the ongoing Teacher/ Head Teacher based School Management. Hitherto community, on an average with few exceptions, has been invited to help either in school construction, or, children's enrolment drives or, in mid day meals management as mere service providers only!

The RTE attempts to break this jinx and empower the community as the lead player in their school management. It expects renewal of School Management Committees with major share (75%) of parents/guardians in the committee. Among them it is a must to involve at least 50% women. In the other 25% there will a greater share of parents from disadvantaged groups. So far as the role of SMC is concerned, it is expected to develop School Development Plan for three years with year wise specific plans keeping in view the requirement of all children in 6 to 14 year age group in the community. Also the Committee is expected to work in close coordination with the Local Authority and teachers to make special provisions for out of school children, children with special needs in form of special training to enable the disadvantaged children acquire the desired knowledge and skills for their age appropriate enrolment in different classes. The SMC will also manage and monitor the processes, in relations in the school to ensure child friendly and child centred learning processes assessed in continuous and comprehensive ways.

This calls for a paradigm shift in thinking and planning for redefining the SMCs and their role and functions. Accordingly this module along with a series of posters aims to create a positive picture in the mind of duty bearers by enabling them to realise the unlimited potential community members carry towards children's learning. Also it attempts to highlight what way community members and teachers can bring in lot of participation, joy and learning opportunities not only for children, but also for teachers and community members themselves. The posters attempt to promote child friendly school and systems by establishing strong bridges (Setu as it is called in many Indian Languages) for effective relationships and processes at school and community level.

SSA, after its harmonisation with the RTE norms, supports three days residential training programme for SMC members. Accordingly this module has been designed. It has a total of 12 sessions with 4 sessions in each day. Other than these the evenings will be used for different community based learning activities that will provide insights, ideas and desired experience to the community members to realise that community life is closely related to school life and each member can contribute significantly to children's life and learning both at school and society by sharing own experience and expertise in a planned way. This workshop will provide each of them hands on experiential learning opportunities that they can enjoy and would like to apply in their own school.

These four sessions every day will have good number of stories, songs, critical discussions and hands on activities using variety of examples, posters, calendars and other resource and reference materials. It is intended that the community members will discover themselves as resourceful partners for school not only for whole school development, but also for whole child development.

Expected outcomes of this workshop are as follows:

- Both the trainers and the participants enjoy discovering the unidentified potential in the community for enriching knowledge, skills, attitude and interest of children and the community.
- Members of SMC understand their role and functions under the RTE Act.
- Members of the SMC experience how to join hands with school and children in a concrete way.
- Members prepare themselves for effective school development and management

Duration of the training programme is just three days where as the responsibility of the SMC members are quite high. Hence this would remain a bit challenging to touch upon all the core components and issues of SMC's capacity building. Hence the training RPs need to utilise the time in the training meticulously. The more it can be effectively utilised, it will be proportionally exciting for all participants and RPs to discover the unidentified potential in the community as learning resources for children.

The other key aspect of this training programme is also to discover the potential in community for quality improvement in school. Community is the best source for quality improvement in school as it is organically linked to children's life and learning. At the same time it has not been fully realised and utilised. This is the opportunity to prove this point that community in collaboration with teachers is the best partner for quality improvement in school education. This workshop provides ample examples to prove this point. The examples like Mapan Mela, Khoj Mela, etc. along with year wide community based learning activities as narrated in the calendars and posters.

The RPS need to take special care of the posters and calendars in different sessions. Field trialling of these posters have reflected unmatched enthusiasm as the participants discover the potential in the community and demand copies of the same for understanding the concepts further. This gives us the hope that these posters, calendars and community based learning activities have a good potential to create ripples. The RPs need to use these resources in a systematic way as desired in the module so that the participants discuss and understand each one and start dreaming for adding wings to these ideas. Each of these posters and activities will forward to stronger wings to spread the message that community can improve school quality in a significant manner in collaboration with teachers and children.

Programme Schedule

"Our Children, Our School"
Setu building workshop

Day (Duration)	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4
	9.00 – 10.45 + 15 minutes tea break	11.00 – 13.00 + 45 minutes lunch break	13.45 – 15.30 + 15 minutes tea break	15.45 – 17.00
Day 1	"We are more than what we feel"	We look at our 'School'	We rethink School that ensures Rights of Children	We design Community based Learning Activities • Mapan Mela • Khoj mela • Samaj Khoj mela • Bhasha ebam Sanskritik mela
Day 2	We design a 'Whole School'	We welcome ALL Children to School	We design Key Indicators of School Development	We prepare our School Development Plan
Day 3	We identify Partners for School Development	We value Money to get Results for Children	We know what to do if any Child Right is violated	We are ready

