

Appendix 28

Proposed Work in Education

The Social Initiatives Group, ICICI Bank, along with its partner organisations Eklavya and Vidya Bhawan Society, has been engaged for the past six months in understanding the educational scenario and activities in Bihar. Based on the experience of working in Chhattisgarh along with Digantar, Eklavya and Vidya Bhawan, we have been discussing different initiatives for working towards quality improvement in elementary schools in Bihar. The discussions have been guided by the Government of Bihar's efforts to work towards a long-term vision of institutional building with institutions such as the SCERT and DIETs.

The following constitutes a tentative plan for further discussion in this direction:

- ? Participating in the long-term visioning exercise for institutional development of the SCERT and/or chosen DIETs. This would then be followed by a sustained engagement with the faculty of these institutions on issues of curriculum, textbook, teacher training, research, school follow-up, planning, teaching learning materials etc.
- ? Organising the proposed workshop for capacity-building of a 40-strong resource group which will be primarily responsible for writing new textbooks based on the new syllabus and curriculum. (This is with reference to the letter received from the SCERT director proposing such a workshop)
- ? Setting up a Pitara for making innovative educational materials and activities accessible for children and teachers.
- ? Collaborating with local NGO partners for working at block and/or cluster level with the schools, BRC/CRC and potentially DIET.

In order to carry out these different activities, we would require to understand the long-term perspective of the government with respect to the SCERT and role that it will play in the current and future improvement of elementary schools and the role the Govt sees for the resource support that we can possibly contribute. In this the form of leadership which the SCERT will receive and how this can aid the strengthening of the institution is also crucial. Similarly, to undertake work at a block or district level we would endeavour to collaborate with NGOs who have an experience of undertaking such work. While we have had conversations with a few organisations, direction or suggestions in this regard would benefit the exercise.

1 On the invitation of the Government of Chhattisgarh, Eklavya, Digantar and Vidya Bhawan have been working for the past four years with the SCERT of Chhattisgarh in curriculum and textbook

development, and teacher-training, planning activities of the SCERT, and engagement with DIETs, etc. Various resource persons from universities and other institutions have come together in this effort. This effort has been facilitated by the Social Initiatives Group.