

ENGLISH LITERATE JOYADA: 1 YEAR REPORT SUMMARY

A] BACKGROUND:

One of LeapForWord's longest serving teachers in Shirpur, Shamlal Pawara and his team won the Gram Panchayat elections in their village Joyada in July, 2016. He however refused to become the Sarpanch, instead chose to remain a Samiti (*council*) member with responsibility of the Education portfolio.

On starting office, the first big goal he set for himself was - To make every school going child in his Village, English literate. This is a fairly tall task considering there are close to 300 students attending 5 different Zilla Parishad schools in a 100% tribal village where not many parents value the importance of education. However the challenge was exciting - something we have waited to see for long. So, at LeapForWord we lapped up the chance and offered our full support to Sham in this one-of-its kind (never tried before) endeavor. However with one condition - all stakeholders in the ecosystem should come together to realize this.

So, Sham organized a meeting for LeapForWord with the village Sarpanch & all 5 ZP school teachers. We had just 2 questions for them: Does the end-state of every child English literate excite them AND are they willing to participate in its making over the next 2 academic years? The answer to both was an emphatic YES.

With the intentionality of all parties confirmed, we agreed upon a simple plan - Trained Local Youth will deliver LeapForWord English lessons 1-hour everyday outside of school hours. Each of the 3 parties offered to do the following:

1. ZP school teachers: Identify, Screen and Longlist the local youth (~10) | Encourage parents to send their kids to the class everyday
2. Gram Panchayat: Provide rent-free classrooms + a monthly Rs.500 stipend to each youth tutor and Encourage parents to pay a monthly tuition fee of ~Rs.15 that will go to the tutor
3. LeapForWord: Train & certify the tutors | Provide teaching aids & student workbooks | Conduct Assessments & track every child's performance.

When the meeting ended, it appeared that all 3 of us - Government employees, elected representatives and an External agency - were on the same team. We decided to launch the program on 15th August, 2016

B] Project Objective:

To ensure every child in Joyada is able to Read, Write, Comprehend & Structure Grammatically Correct Sentences (*Elementary Complexity*) in a 3 year period (2016 - 2019)

C] Update#1: December, 2016:

Sham, with support from our end, took up the English Literate Joyada (ELJ) project with fervor and firstly, identified youth who had the inclination to get trained as teachers. We aided Sham in their orientation, training, certification and even re-training. The children on their part underwent our Baseline assessment tests and the test data was analyzed, the logistics were worked out and classes assigned to the teachers. The children selected for this ELJ project were those studying in grades 2 - 4.

From the test data it was found that the kids fell in the following two categories

- 1) Those who could **NOT** recognize alphabets (CAT-1), and
- 2) Those who could only recognize alphabets but nothing more (CAT-2)

In all, 5 teachers certified by us; started teaching students across 11 classes, from mid-September onward. By October-end, i.e, around 6 weeks of learning, the students gave their 1st test - Their results were as follows:

1. **CAT-1:** 34% could identify all alphabets, 21% could write all alphabets and 15% could write their full name
2. **CAT-2:** 47% could read 3-letter words, 36% could spell 3-letter words and 36% could write their full name

D] Update#2: June, 2017:

Six grade 4 students from the Joyada project successfully cleared entrance examinations to get admission into Sainik Schools - These are semi-English schools with limited intake capacity, infra-structurally superior and managed way better than the state run Ashram schools which these kids would otherwise have gone to*. Though this is not the first time+, tribal students from Shirpur have cleared such examinations, never before had so many students from a single village done so. These examinations are difficult because they have a English section which is impossible to clear for any Marathi medium Zilla Parishad school student.

By getting into such schools, the chances of these rural kids accessing higher-education opportunities (*limited otherwise by English*) have become as certain as their peers from cities attending English medium schools. We intend to push this number further up and hope that by June 2019 almost every grade-4 kid from Joyada is clearing these examinations

**: Every Zilla Parishad school in Joyada is only till grade 4. After that kids have to travel to other locations to attend govt.run Ashram schools.*

+: All students in the past who have cleared such exams have attended LFW run classes. The highest number of successful students in 1 year thus far has been 7. However this number came from multiple villages.

E] Update#3: September, 2017:

- **Status:**

- #of students reached: Nearly 250 students across grades 1-4.
- #of learning levels implemented = 2: Foundation Level (Ability to identify alphabets in the lower & upper case) | Elementary Reading (Ability to read simple English words)
- #of teachers trained during the year = 6 | #of teachers dropped out = 2 | #of active teachers = 4

- **Outcome*:**

- Foundation Level: 87% of all students who appeared for the end-of-year test have achieved the level's objective.
- Elementary Reading Level: 81% of all participating students who appeared for the end-of-year test have achieved the level's objective.

- **Impact:**

- Six grade 4 students from the Literate Joyada project successfully cleared the entrance examinations for military schools and will now be studying in these schools till their SSC. Next year's target is 25 students

- **Other:**

- Word Power Championship: We conducted the *Reading, Spelling & Meaning* championship exclusively for students from Shirpur in the month of June. Here is a [VIDEO](#)
- 3 out of the active 4 teachers were brought to Mumbai to spend a day with us. This was a reward for their hard work. None of the teachers had ever visited the city before for leisure purposes. Watch the [STORY](#) of our best teacher "Sarla" from the last year.
- Performance Incentive: To ensure the focus is on results delivered & not on classes conducted, we devised a Performance Metric for all participating teachers. They get a bi-monthly bonus directly linked to the performances of their students in the tests. Average monthly income of teachers was Rs. 2500 for 3 hours of teaching everyday
- We have digitized our Elementary English program and it's now available in the form of a mobile application. As part of our planned exit in 2019, we would have ensured that every participating teacher is certified to use & train others in the use of the mobile application

- **Challenges:**

- Teacher dropout during an on-going year has brought strain on the exit objective. 1 out of the 5 hamlets which make-up the Joyada village lost 2 months of active teaching because there was no teacher to fill-in. For the short term - we have recruited 1 more teacher however during the ongoing year we will train & certify additional 3 teachers who will act as substitutes.
- When we started out last year, the Gram Panchayat had promised to bear the honorarium of Rs. 500 per month for every participating teacher. They however backed out. While this did put a considerable strain on our finances, things are now under control