

State Level Workshop on

# 'Making Schools Accessible to CwSN'



20-22 November 2017

Hotel Cambay Sapphire, Gandhinagar

## WORKSHOP REPORT



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## A. Executive Summary

The current mandate of free and compulsory education for all children aged 6-14 years is based on the principle of inclusive education. Behind this constructive move is the recognition of education as a fundamental right under Article 21A of the Indian Constitution, the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 (RTE) and the 'no rejection policy' of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA). This has opened the doors of mainstream schools to all children with disabilities, commonly known as Children with Special Needs (CwSN), irrespective of the type and degree of disability and calls on schools to ensure inclusion of all children.

Inclusion remains a distant reality for most of CwSN. Various types of barriers continue to impede their participation in education, inaccessible transportation to school, as well as inaccessible facilities in schools such as drinking water units, mid-day meal areas, toilets, inappropriate classroom furniture, slippery flooring, and inadequate illumination and ventilation can pose barriers to the education of CwSN. Furthermore, the prevalence of negative attitudes among parents, communities and teachers, adds to challenge not just of access, but also of retention and learning of CwSN.

In order to address these barriers, a momentum has been initiated through partnership with UNICEF and Samarthyam - a civil society organization. This workshop is organized to build capacities of IED Coordinators, STP Coordinators and Teachers Training Coordinators involved in the functional areas of inclusion, access and pedagogy.

The participants have been joined in Accessible India Campaign (Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan) to make schools accessible. The terminology and concepts were cleared through detailed discussion and understanding on a guidebook: "Making Schools Accessible to Children with Disabilities" developed by UNICEF India with the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, and Samarthyam, a Disabled Persons Organization (DPO), as part of the Prime Minister's Accessible India Campaign. The guidebook covers the entire phenomenon on Accessibility, Attitudinal-Behavioral Reforms, Gender Friendly Designs, Weather Proof Environment, Emergency Preparedness-Egress and School Development Plan through advocacy and community awareness on accessibility.

This workshop has covered access situation analysis of schools, including method and process to identify gaps and barriers of the existing learning environment and built infrastructure along with standards for accessible building elements and attitudinal changes for classroom transactions. The workshop has conveyed practices for equal opportunities to all and universal designs for accessibility along with sensitivity towards attitudinal and environmental changes through disability simulation exercise, drawing mockup and group work of access audit. At end of the workshop, the participants become competent on advocacy for accessibility and community awareness for inclusive education.

## B. Introduction, objectives and outline of the workshop

### Introduction:

Education is a fundamental right of all children, including children with special needs. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act (RTE) mandates schools to become child-friendly, inclusive spaces where children from diverse backgrounds can actively participate in learning through child-centered activities. The current mandate of free and compulsory education for all children aged 6-14 years in India is based on the principle of inclusive education. As per the RTE norms, all schools should be barrier free and accessible to children with disabilities. The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act also mandates universal access for all children to inclusive schools and calls for making educational buildings, campuses and various facilities accessible to children with disabilities.

Promoting inclusive education begins with creating barrier-free and child-centered inclusive schools where every child enjoys her or his rights on an equal basis. In recognition of the importance of school infrastructure being accessible for promoting inclusive education, UNICEF has developed a guidebook Making Schools Accessible to Children with Disabilities in partnership with the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment and Samartham — a civil society organization.

The present partnership is being proposed to build capacities of functionaries, including inclusive education coordinators, block level officers, technical consultants, engineers and civil works personnel involved in construction and maintenance of school buildings. The partnership will involve:

- (i) Access Situation Analysis of schools;
- (ii) Capacity Building workshops for Civil Works Master Trainers,
- (iii) Awareness Generation and Sensitization Programmes for Education Functionaries

UNICEF and SSA are jointly working on Inclusive Education Initiative and supporting 1000 selected schools through IED-SSA mechanism. So as a part of further development to boost the initiative, it would be likely to extend the support for following activities to strengthen capacities to achieve the goal of Inclusive Education in Gujarat.

#### Details of Activities:

Sr. No.	Activity	No. of activities	No. of Days required	Participants/ details	No. of participants/d etails	Suggestive Week/Dates
1	Access Situation Analysis of Schools	1	2	NA	4 schools	13 <sup>th</sup> – 18 <sup>th</sup> Nov. week (Any 2 continuous days)
2	Capacity building workshop for Civil works MTs	1	2	District Level Civil Engineers of SSA	30-35 participants	13 <sup>th</sup> – 18 <sup>th</sup> Nov. week (Any 2 continuous days)
3	Orientation on Awareness generation and Sensitization	5 (1 State Level + 4 Zonal level)	5 (One Day each)	DPEOs, OICs – TT, IED, select BRCCs	30-35 participants per Orientation	20 <sup>th</sup> – 25 <sup>th</sup> Nov. week / 27 <sup>th</sup> Nov. – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Dec. week (Any 5 continuous days)

Sr. No.	Activity	No. of activities	No. of Days required	Participants/ details	No. of participants/d etails	Suggestive Week/Dates
					(Total 150 – 175 participants)	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1 Situation Analysis + 6 Trgs.</b>	<b>9 days</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>4 schools + 180 – 210 participants</b>	<b>-</b>

### Objective:

Overall objective of the workshop is to build capacity of the district level officials (IED Coordinators, STP Coordinators and Teachers Training Coordinators; who looks after inclusive education, access to elementary education and teachers training under SSA) and concern state officials with theme focusing on identification of attitudinal and physical barriers and standards to make schools accessible to CwSN.

Specific objectives of the workshop:

- To create sensitivity with understanding on accessibility in broad sense
- To convey method and process to identify gaps and barriers in terms of built infrastructure, behavior and classroom process
- To convey attitudinal changes and standards for accessible building elements
- To move on equal learning opportunity and universal design for accessibility to all
- To initiate a momentum for attitudinal and environmental changes requisite for facilitating equal rights of education to all
- To cultivate advocacy for accessibility and community awareness

### Methodology of the workshop:

The workshop imparted for one full days per batch conducted in total three batches for respectively for IED Coordinators, STP Coordinators and Teachers Training Coordinators. The workshop combines theory and practice in a highly participatory and interactive manner. There were few input sessions followed by simulation exercise and drawing mockup round. Based on these sessions and exercises, the group exercise was done by participants in terms of attitudinal and physical elements mandatory for accessibility. Special attention was given to creating a strong learning environment which generates prior knowledge to the participants about accessibility, barriers and standards for learning environment including built elements. The learning was reflected and internalized through the various tools and guides in the process.

Following areas covered during the workshop:

- Understanding of accessibility
- Cross disability approach
- Behavioral reforms for elimination of stigma towards differentially abled

- Equal learning opportunity and universal design of built elements
- Group work on behavioral and environmental reforms mandatory for accessibility
- Tactics for attitudinal and environmental changes for access

### **Outputs of the workshop:**

- Improved understanding and sensitivity towards accessibility
- Developed competencies to make classroom transactions inclusive and accessible
- Working knowledge on standardization of built elements for accessibility
- Evolving advocacy for making school accessible and competency to aware other stakeholders, community etc.

### **Participants:**

One participant per district, IED Coordinator, STP Coordinator and Teachers Training Coordinator was invited batch-wise separately during 20-22 November, 2017 respectively. Total 135 officials of following categories participated in 3 batches:

- IED Coordinator from all Districts
- STP Coordinator from all Districts
- Teachers Training Coordinators from all Districts
- UNICEF Representatives
- Other Resource Persons-Facilitator
- Others

### **Facilitator of the workshop:**

1. Ms. Anjee Agarwal from Samartham - National Centre for Accessible Environment, India
2. Mr. Debabrata Chakravarti, from Samartham - National Centre for Accessible Environment, India

## C. Workshop Proceeding Report

### Inaugural Session

At outset, the experts, other invitees and all the participants were welcomed warmly to the workshop. Ms. Anjlee Agarwal, Accessibility Consultant to Government of India and founder of Samarthyam — a civil society organization introduced with workshop background and journey of Samarthyam in 20 years working experience with MHRD. She oriented the participants regarding the workshop which has different approach of leaning, as it covers how to teach CwSN and challenges to teach the subjects. She briefed about tactics to make classroom, school environment accessible and how teacher can contribute their role for same. She conveyed the participants towards interesting sessions having practical and exercises. She also promised to give experience of challenges and barriers of CwSN. She thanked UNICEF and SSA to give such opportunity towards delivery of efforts to make all CwSN coming to schools regularly and no one out of school.

Mr. Debabrata Chakravarti, working in the area of universal design for accessibility highlighted glimpses of workshop theme and methodology which was based on practical learning and discussion on theory with live interactions with the participants. He also shared expectations to learn at the level of making capable the participants to define roadmap for implementation in the schools. The participants were oriented in detail on workshop aims and objectives.

Mr. Hitendra Joshi, Officer in charge, Inclusive Education, SSA addressed the participants with introductory approach to one day workshop organized with support of UNICEF and Samarthyam to motivate the stakeholders and enhancing their capavity. He emphasized to view the schools with lens of inclusion. He approached all participants who are pedagogy personnel working with classroom transactions to move all children towards accessibility in schools through changes proposed as under:

- Attitudinal changes
- Environmental changes
- Teachers behavior
- Social environment

He added that small things and detailing are important like signage, use of sign language, barriers and how can be resolved that is to be learn through experience. He oriented the participants to learn about how to work in team with school so that school takes ownership. The efforts were narrated in the area of Access, Equity, Quality and Community Participation by Mr.Joshi. He also shared the details of awareness and ownership taken by community for usage of school infrastructure, including social audit being carried out by School Management Committee (SMC).

He concluded the session with appeal to break all attitudinal barriers obstructing classroom learning to all as an equal right.

Mr.P.K. Trivedi, Secretary, SSA welcomed all the participants, experts and invitees to the workshop organized by UNICEF and SSA. He introduced about good work done under

inclusive education for accessible education to join the chain for delivery of efforts. He shared that workshop of civil engineers was also held to make infrastructure barrier free. He added that IED Coordinators were oriented to make education accessible to CwSN. He discussed that Teachers Training Coordinators have key role to give better atmosphere to CwSN through their overwhelming support and coordination as they are involved with teachers training and academic guidance related to pedagogy. He appealed the participants to raise the issue of accessibility whenever have an opportunity to reach at massive level.

Mr. Trivedi shared the details of key reforms initiated under teachers training including online teachers training, training need analysis through Google form, integrated subject module for training on inclusive education and revision of curriculum. He requested the experts to integrate the topic regarding how to teach CwSN with existing classroom process. He concluded the session by asking to take responsibility to work better in this area as per provision of law and to spread this message at school level through stakeholders of hierarchical structure.

Mrs. Jashree Devangan, Additional State Project Director, SSA wished all the best for new learning from expertise of Samarthyam. She explained to treat the children with diverse context by different way. She emphasized to learn more to avail benefits to the children. Mrs.Devangan shared that there are 250 barrier free schools in the State, as of now and decision taken to make 250 schools accessible in true sense during workshop of Civil



Engineers. She wished to concentrate on role of attitudinal changes as physical change in infrastructure will be undertaken by Civil Engineers.

### Access perceptions and terminology

A quick round of introduction was executed along with assessing understanding of "Accessibility" and individual view towards same. The terms of accessibility were clarified during the discussion; which were,

- 'Sugamyata' in hindi
- Accessibility to all including each child and individual which may be teachers, parents, elders
- Accessibility is not up to reaching school but it also reachability to Class room, Wash room, Play ground, Drinking Water, HM room etc.
- Safe : the facilities are not accessible which are not safe
- Entry and exit with comfort
- Reachability, usability, safety and dignity

Group discussion was held in detail regarding perceptions and terminology of 'Access' including understanding of Access standards. The discussion was concluded with defined terminology of 'Accessibility' in terms of independent usage, safety and dignity, gender friendly designs, weather proof environment, emergency preparedness and egress, school development plan.

### Stigmatization and Discrimination

Stigmatization and discrimination can perpetuate exclusive policies and can contribute to the difficulties in the implementation of inclusive policies. Ms.Anjlee described the phenomenon for implementation of inclusion to all. She asked to think yourself, not about CwSN as what is required by you is also required by all. She explained that we always forget that CwSN also have some desires and expectations. She emphasized to have all CwSN in schools with regularity. She delivered following key point of instructions to avoid stigmatization and discrimination to CwSN:

- Don't call child with category of disability as CwSN have accepted their disability and they don't have choice to transform themselves
- Call child by name to give feeling of respect
- CwSN must not be sit in a corner of classroom for true sense of inclusion
- Don't call normal - abnormal child as they have same way of living
- Be conscious to do not hurt CwSN directly or indirectly

### Disability Simulation Exercise

A simulation exercise was held for the participants to let them get understanding of diverse access needs through use of assistive devices i.e. wheel chair, white cane and impact on space usage. The Cross Disability Approach was adopted for the exercise. The exercise was executed to convey that accept what we have and feel proud. An exercise of reduced mobility was demonstrated to visualize disability could be happened with anybody and anytime.



A wheelchair, often abbreviated to just "chair", is a chair with wheels, used when walking is difficult or impossible due to illness, injury, or disability. Wheelchairs come in a wide variety of formats to meet the specific needs of their users.

A white cane is used by many people who are blind or visually impaired. Primarily it aids its user to scan their surroundings for obstacles or orientation marks, but is also helpful for other traffic participants in identifying the user as blind or visually impaired and taking appropriate care. The latter is the reason for the cane's prominent white colour, which in many jurisdictions is mandatory.



### Cross Disability Approach

It is an approach that does not distinguish between types of disability. In other words – it is an approach which comprehensively takes in to account all different kinds of disabilities together and promote collective planning. In this approach focusing on particular subgroup should be avoided whenever possible because **“distinction often leads the most vulnerable people to further stigmatization.”** This is about to make policy decision collectively and gives equal weightage across all disabilities for the disabled people themselves. This approach seeks co-operation and network on various categories of disabled, Includes different disabled persons and with different abilities.

The participants were instructed very well to get ready for 30 minutes disability simulation exercise. The exercise was basically for giving live experience to get feelings of locomotive



impairment and visual impairment and day to day problems of wheel chair bound and visually impaired persons.

The participants were divided in two groups. The members of one group was passed through simulation exercise on wheel chair for locomotive impairment and another group members experienced the real problems of visually impaired by covering eyes through blindfold (black band) and white cane in hand to scan their surroundings for obstacles or orientation marks. Few of the participants were passes through simulation without aiding tool by binding one leg from knee or banded tow hands on back side. Each participant was facilitated by a buddy to take care about potential hazard during simulation. They had the tasks to take a cup of tea, go downstairs, making inquiry at reception, crossing the road and returning to workshop hall. After half part of the exercise, the participants were switched over to role of buddy to have dual experience.

The participants were oriented on usage aiding tools for their simulation exercise respectively. A demonstration was done by Ms. Anjee on wheel chair to give exposure about how to use wheel chair including go forward-backward, taking twist and 360 degree turn. Mr.Chakravarti demonstrated to use white cane for scanning obstacles and finding way based on orientation marks identified through white cane.

### **Simulation Exercise Feedback**

The participants felt real experience of barriers being faced by differentially able persons. The feedback was overviewed from each of the participant after completion of simulation exercise. This was the experience in life for the participants. A common feedback of exercise was that it is a difficult task. The feedback was reported in their words narrating live experience of simulation.

#### **Barriers' experience with Wheel Chair:**

- The participants were facing difficulties in passing through ramp despite of having good ramp-railing facility and experienced that what feeling would have with CwSN for facing the same for whole life.
- The participants shared their feelings of tension, anxiety and pain.
- The participants realized pain of wheel chair users who uses it on daily basis.
- The participants experienced hit on respect on using toilet of opposite gender as other toilets are not accessible.
- It was visualized that if problem persists in four star hotel and level of difficulties are un-imaginary at schools.
- It was felt that if ramps are not proper as per standards, then what helpless condition incurred for CwSN.

#### **Barriers' experience with White Cane:**

- The participants felt that they have viewed lots of people having visual impairment crossing road easily, but it is not easy task.
- It was understood that if such problems exist in 15-10 minutes exercise then the thought of whole life is even fearful.
- It was experienced that hotel was viewed properly when eyes were closed.

- It was opined that discrepancies and shortfalls of infrastructure were observed precisely when felt as visually impaired.
- It was realized that safety is non-compromisable as not having a buddy to facilitate CwSN for whole life.
- It was discussed that the signages are not placed indicating speed limit on both sides of roads at outside of each school.
- It was noticed that detailing of small-small things are important, like opening of doors-windows, width of doors, floor leveling etc.

After simulation exercise, the participants were appealed to carry this sensitivity continuously to make good barrier free schools and all participants were agreed to do so.

### Simulation exercise for deafblind children

Mr. Sachin and Ms. Shruti from Sense International oriented the participants regarding identification of deafblind children and their pre-primary education through sense of other body parts and tactile method. They have demonstrated different method of classroom transactions. Sense International is supporting and advocating for better services for deafblind children and adults across India and partner with NGOs and the government to provide them with care and education.



## Understanding barriers - attitudinal and physical environment

Ms. Anjee Agarwal made a presentation on case study carried out for status of accessibility at four schools of Gujarat. The presentation had covered detailed understanding of barriers and requisite transformation in attitudinal as well as physical requirement. She oriented the participants towards long journey of achieving accessibility in schools and to start from today.

The presentation was started with brief introduction about Samarthyam which is a civil society organization founded by persons with disabilities in 1994. It was shared that Samarthyam is the pioneer in conducting access audits, have developed Indian Accessibility Codes and Standards for



Government of India. Samarthyam is working with a mission to make world accessible and vision of embracing the ideals of all people living together harmoniously in a barrier free world without fear of exclusion and non-discrimination.

As the results of momentum initiated, a guidebook was launched in December 2016 for making schools accessible which is the first book to standardize accessibility in India. It was also shared that United Nations recognized this guidebook by Zero Project Award for Best Innovative Policy, 2016. The participants were informed on Accessible India Campaign (Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan) which was launched in year 2015 by Government of India to make schools accessible.

### **Accessible India Campaign (Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan)**

Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD) launched Accessible India Campaign (Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan) as a nation-wide Campaign for achieving universal accessibility for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs). Accessible India Campaign or Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan is a program which is set to be launched to serve the differently-able community of the country. The program comes with an index to measure the design of disabled-friendly buildings and human resource policies. The flagship program will be launched by the Prime Minister on 3 December 2015, the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. The initiative also in line with the Article 9 of UNCRPD (UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities) to which India is a signatory since 2007. The scheme also comes under Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995 under section 44, 45, 46 for equal Opportunities and protection of rights which provides non-discrimination in Transport to Persons with Disabilities.

According to the 2011 Census of India, 2.21 per cent of the population or approximately 26.8 million Indians suffer from a disability. The target is to make at least fifty percent government buildings disabled friendly under the campaign in each of the state capital and central capital till end of May 2018 and make 25 per cent of the public transport vehicles under government as disabled friendly till mid 2017. It also envisages further development

with bigger targets in the following years. In this way, the overall environment becomes more inclusive and provides equal opportunities to the person with disability. A website will also be made where the people can put their views on the accessibility of any building. By July 2016, the international airports in the country and railway stations which come under A1, A and B categories will be made fully disabled-friendly.

Special set-top boxes will be made available to make watching TV more convenient for the visually impaired. In the next 5 years, almost 200 persons will be trained to speak in sign languages on government TV channels. Government websites will also be made friendlier by using text to speech option. The initiative involves retrofitting buildings, framing such standards for new buildings and transport that they are friendly to the differently-abled, auditing private companies on 'accessibility index' standard and making all government websites friendly to the differently-abled.



## Guidebook's Salient features

UNICEF India has developed a guidebook: "Making Schools Accessible to Children with Disabilities" with the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, and Samarthyam, a Disabled Persons Organization (DPO), as part of the Prime Minister's Accessible India Campaign. The features of guidebook on Making Schools Accessible to Children with Disabilities' were described in detail, which covers,

- Accessibility - Independent Usage, Safety and Dignity
- Gender Friendly Designs
- Weather Proof Environment
- Emergency Preparedness and Egress
- School Development Plan

Inclusive education is critical to promote the participation and learning for children with disabilities in India. The guidebook details the physical/infrastructural barriers children with disabilities may face in schools and provides practical solutions for making the physical environment of a school safe and accessible for children with disabilities.

A checklist is included that which can be used as a tool to assess the accessibility of schools and to identify areas need improvement.

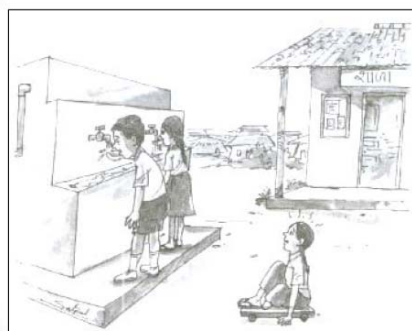
Clear standards and specifications are provided, with photos and illustrations, which can be used with civil works personnel, towards making necessary changes or during construction.

## Problems Targeted

It was shared that 500 schools were audited to prepare guidebook. The guidebook puts forth the physical barriers disabled children may face in schools and provides solutions for making the physical environment of a school safe and accessible for children with disabilities. The participants were conveyed on major problems targeted as under:

- Enrolment of children with disabilities less than 1% of all school-aged-children in India
- Girls with disability less likely to attend and complete the school particularly in rural settings, due to lack of accessible toilets
- Considerable distance to school makes girls more vulnerable to abuse
- Inadequate measures - emergency preparedness and egress

### Special, Not Equal



Will not drink water.....



## Access Audit of Four Schools

Samarthyam audited four schools in Gujarat in terms accessibility to CwSN. The audited schools are as per below:

1. Chandlodiya Primary School
2. Ghatlodiya Primary School
3. Tarapur Primary School
4. Shahpur Primary School

The highlights of audit were shared along with common barriers experienced by children, cost effective solutions to overcome them and non-negotiable universal design elements.

### Design for Diversity

#### Design for Diversity



## Barriers

The identified barriers were discussed along with photographs for each element of the infrastructure starting from entry gate to classrooms, corridor, HM room, toilets. The barriers were identified based on checklist (page 11) of guidebook 'Making Schools Accessible to Children with Disabilities'. The barriers were narrated as physical barriers in terms of discrepancies of infrastructure development and attitudinal barriers regarding insensitivity and behavioral towards CwSN and their comfort, rights, dignity & safety.

### **Approach to School:**

The participants were sensitized on discrepancies found during accessibility audit of four schools through photographs on each and explained how it could create obstacles for CwSN while approaching to school. Major barriers found in approaching schools are as per below:

- Garbage collection point too near to school entry gate
- Ground level difference at entry
- Small doorsill at entry
- Lack of tactile warning and guiding tiles at entry and pathway
- Lack of speed limit signage at both side of road near school entry/exit gate
- Un-even step risers at main entry door steps

### **Ramp:**

Insensitivity of supervisors and masons were demonstrated through photographs of ramp constructed in schools. Major issues found in ramp are as per below:

- Ramp exists, but non-availability of railing
- Non-usable ramp on account of closed entry against it through grill
- Lack of continuity i.e. lack of pathway connecting all scattered building blocks at same ground level / through ramp
- Sand pit and loose sand at starting point of ramp
- Insensitivity towards usability of ramp
- Ignorance of norms for ramp-railing height, width and slope ratio
- Non-availability of railing at both side with standardized height, length and diameter of railing bar to have proper grip
- Un-used objects placed in front of ramp
- Unmaintained transition points of ramps
- Unavailability of landing area where turn or stop required for wheel chair, similarly required for toilet and corridor
- Ramps not ensuring accessibility up to classroom, library, drinking water, wash area, HM room
- Small doorsill at classroom entry

### **Corridors and Staircase:**

The barriers demonstrated for generating sensitivity towards small things seeking genuine care regarding corridors and staircases. The key barriers discussed as under:

- Obstacles in corridors in terms of opened window and doors outside in corridor
- Parapet wall instead of railing which is for safety not to hold in staircase
- Un-even step risers of stairs
- Lack of railing at both side of stairs at proper height
- Lack of continuity i.e. lack of pathway connecting all scattered building blocks at same ground level / through ramp
- Small steps of floor level gaps in corridor
- Lack of tactile warning and guiding tiles in corridor
- Required i-BaLA (Inclusive Building as Learning Aid) by integrating Gujarat's good example of BaLA (Building as Learning Aid)
- Required to fix sign language charts in common area

- Required to place signages along with brailed text at accessible height for class rooms, toilets, drinking water

### **Drinking Water:**

The audit observations were shared with participants regarding accessibility of drinking water facility. The key observations are as per below:

- Lack of multi-level taps
- Un-availability of glass for water
- Least level of tap higher than age of primary class children
- Sprinkled water near facility
- A step to access water taps
- Un-availability of connecting pathway or ramp for accessibility
- Lack of tap at lower height comfortable to wheel chair users

### **Class Rooms:**

The Classrooms were seem very impressive to audit team which have proper lighting, Gyankunj Classrooms and Google Future Classrooms with technology tools like projector, laptop, smart board and chrome books. The students were observed as keen to learn through technology. These facilities were seen first time in Gujarat only by the audit team across India. The key observations of audit were as per below:

- Unavailability of inclusive software (talking software or similar to that) in smart interactive classrooms
- Availability of space between green board and students' sitting
- Un-availability of mattress for students in Pragna class
- Un-even sitting arrangements for the students, some sitting on floor and some on benches
- Small doorsill at classroom entry

### **Toilet:**

The awareness was accumulated in the participants with discussion on accessibility of toilets along with audit observations and photographs narrating the same. The common barriers were discussed as under:

- High steps to toilets and no ramp
- Located separately as neglected area of school
- Lack of signage for boys, girls and CwSN toilets (preferred with brailed )
- Contrast color tiles confusing low vision children
- Sleepy tiles
- Steps which are avoidable
- Accessible toilet not usable for all
- Dumped buckets and sweeping tools in CwSN toilets
- Lack of proper signage for CwSN toilet (preferred simply written as Toilet with symbol of CwSN)
- Lack of following standard dimension for CwSN toilets (required 2 mtr x 2.2 mtr size, 1.5 mtr turning space for wheel chair, door opening out side, door handle & switch board height, L shape, U shape grab bar)

### **Attitudinal barriers and community awareness:**

The participants were appealed to involve community while developing school infrastructure. The interactions with School Management Committee (SMC) members and other community would be resulted in elimination of attitudinal barriers and physical barriers by cultivating sensitivity, behavior change and detailing of minor modifications in design. The involvement of stakeholders, community and parents and understanding of accessibility would boost the way towards making barrier free schools. The participants were conveyed to invite participation of parents, teachers and SMC members for preparing Whole School Development Plan (WSDP) and School Development Plan (SDP).

### **Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)**

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) has been ratified or acceded to by 172 states (March 2017). Article 2 defines discrimination on the basis of disability as “any distinction, exclusion or restriction on the basis of disability which has the purpose or effect of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal basis with others, of all human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field”. Article 4 puts an obligation on states parties “to ensure and promote the full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all persons with disabilities without discrimination of any kind on the basis of disability”,

### **Key Recommendations**

- Understanding and awareness on standards for accessibility on each element of built infrastructure for equal opportunities to all
- Small modifications and adoption of universal design for built infrastructure to make it accessible for classroom transactions with all children and old aged guardians, parents etc.
- Conveying learning to teachers for requisite support for integrated efforts at school level
- Discussion on points of advocacy for accessibility with teachers, parents, SMC and inviting their participation
- Use of brail in signage
- Inclusive BaLA (i-BaLA) for encouraging CwSN
- Use of leaning experience and exercises in trainings of Balmitra / Teachers
- Ensuring safety and accessibility to girls studying in KGBVs

### **Drawing Mockup**

A drawing mockup session was executed in the workshop to give live exposure with barriers of inaccessible toilets and standards of barrier free toilets. For this exercise, there were two colored lines drawn on the floor and first tried out to the smaller dimension of toilets by putting thermocol wall of toilets. WC was set at corner of the toilet by putting a chair. A participant played a role of wheelchair user and tried to use that toilet. The live exposure to that condition narrated the barriers and then thermocol walls were shifted to next colored line which was accessible toilet as per standards in terms of dimensions.

During the exercise, the points of standardization were discussed in detail with practical experience. The key standards which were discussed are as per below:

- Overall minimum dimension of toilet 2 x 2.2 Mtr.
- On right side of WC, U shape movable grab bar
- On left side of WC, L shape fixed grab bar
- Fixed WC at 350 to 500 mm from left wall to center point of WC
- Door opening at both side
- Door lock at approachable height
- Ventilation in such a way to use it for emergency evacuation

## Group Work

The experts; Ms.Anjlee Agarwal and Mr.D.Chakravarti conveyed the detailed instructions for group exercises. The participants were divided in two groups with mixed group of covering persons with disability. The groups were guided to go through practical exercise for checking of dimensions for ramp railing, acceptance of own characteristics and reduced mobility



conditions. The groups were structured well with distribution of work for review of requirement of elements for accessibility in schools.

After group work, the groups worked on preparing group presentation along with their feedback, recommendations and understanding on barriers to make school accessible along with working sketch on each recommendation.

## Group Presentation

The group work was presented by both the groups subsequently on barriers and recommendation to make school accessible. The observations, measurements, barriers and recommendations were discussed in detail as per learning on barriers and standardization of each element. The groups were interacted very well to boost up their learning and its applicability. While one group was presenting, other group was raising questions on their recommendation and observation. The group discussion was resulted in advocacy for development of sustainable and accessible facilities for all.

## Concluding Remarks

At the end of group presentations, State Project Director, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Mr. Sandeep Kumar, IAS thanked Samarthyam and UNICEF and expressed his gratitude for organizing the workshop. He congratulated all the participants to participate in such a wonderful programme.



He assessed the feedback of the participants and conveyed inclusion of Out of School Children without any bias and specially CwSN. He directed the participants to ensure accessibility to all children as per provision of Disability Act. He shared the details of an initiative, Vehicle Tracking System launched tracking of transportation facility being provided to children. He asked to follow detailed instructions for implementation of GPS based tracking to ensure

completion of elementary education of children in proper way.

He examined the group work and thanked all for participation in group learning. He appealed to utilize learning experiences by conveying same up to school level for classroom

transactions. State Project Director discussed the concept of accessible schools in terms of planning for budget proposal of new item under state budget and wished to make 200-300 existing schools accessible in proper way.

Mr. Sandeep Kumar focused on need teachers' support in addition to accessible built infrastructure. The participants were encouraged to promote participation and attendance of the children through approach like Pragna, Gyankunj.

He appreciated the way of learning adopted for the workshop and emphasized to have same method for sensitization under online teachers training for inclusive education to CwSN. He also shared shifting trend of teachers training which would be need based. Mr. Sandeep Kumar concluded with hope to go forward with learning experience and utilize it in proper way.

### **Feedback on Workshop**

Ms.Anjlee thanked all the participants for so energetic and live interactions during the workshop. She thanked UNICEF and SSA for organizing the workshop and gave homework exercise to the participants to actually deliver the learning in field. She also invited all the participants to review issues and queries on WhatsApp group. He appreciated the participants for exercise completed by hard work.

## D. Annexures to the Workshop Report

### Annex I : Planned Schedule of the Workshop



#### Capacity Building Workshop Tentative Programme Schedule

##### Day 1

	Time	Session	Speaker
Registration	09:30-10.00am		
Inaugural Session	10.00-10.15am	Inaugural Session - Orientation on Workshop Including aims and objectives	UNICEF Ed. Department Samarthyam
	10.15-10.45am	Ice breaking Access perceptions and terminology including understanding Access Standards- Group discussion	
	10.45-11:00am	Tea Break	
Technical Sessions	11:00-11:45am	Disability Simulation exercise-Understanding diverse access needs: cross disability- use of assistive devices and impact on space usage	Anjlee Agarwal D. Chakravarti
	11:45-12:00am	Simulation exercise feed back	Group work
	12:00-12:30pm	Understanding barriers –attitudinal & physical environment	D. Chakravarti
	12:30-01:30pm	Universal Design – external & internal environment in schools	Anjlee Agarwal
	01:30-02:15pm	Lunch Break	
Technical Sessions	02:15-04.00pm	Functions of Access Features: Why certain access features are needed in schools? (Mock ups of toilets, corridors, etc.)	Group work
	4:00-4.20pm	Presentation of guidelines on how to conduct an access audit and use of Access Audit Toolkit	Anjlee Agarwal
	04:20-04:30pm	Tea break	
Technical Sessions	04:30-04:45pm	Access glossary and terms to be used Understanding Access Audit checklist	Anjlee Agarwal, D. Chakravarti
	04:45-05:00pm	Identification of groups, debriefing and task marking for access audit of pre-identified school building	D. Chakravarti

