

**AN IMPACT ANALYSIS
of
RMKM's Inclusive Education Effort**

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Background

RMKM's efforts to address the needs of children with disability through special education, especially those with intellectual disabilities, commenced in 1991. The institution ran two well established special schools and a number of other services. However, partly as an outcome of SRTT supported projects and reviews, RMKM came to realise that a shift to a more 'inclusive' approach would benefit their focus group as well as other children – that is, an education where children with disabilities and those without disabilities, would study together. The decision was informed by considerable research, theoretical and practical inputs, and technical support. The outcome was a long-term plan to enable inclusive education as well as a more inclusive society in the Ajmer district. Within this, a shorter term project of three years was implemented as a preparatory phase. Among others, the key objectives were to:

- Evolve a model of inclusive education that would work in RMKM schools (and be feasible for use in other schools)
- Develop RMKM's capacity to design, implement & manage IE
- Generate resources at the organizational and systemic to support the introduction and spread of inclusive education, and
- Identify partners from among organisations and community to further the efforts.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Impact Evaluation Study sought to assess:

- the nature of impact attained by RMKM's efforts, and
- the degree to which the key objectives have been attained

Interaction with children, teachers, RMKM functionaries, parents and community members, as well as observation of classroom and community interaction processes was undertaken. Secondary data, records maintained at the schools and a number of relevant documents were examined as part of assessing the impact. 'Impact' was understood both in terms of how critical stake holders (e.g. children, teachers) were affected, as well as how the different spheres of action (such as classrooms, school) changed over time.

Impact on Children

- Enrolment of children with disabilities as well as normal children has grown substantially over the project period, with the total going from 89 to 202. Data from other sources (such as SSA) indicate that RMKM's overall coverage is fairly high, though the proportion of girls is below their share of population. Greater effort would be needed to improve the gender balance, given the socio-cultural context of the communities involved. As of now, RMKM remains the only source for the education of disabled children in the area, particularly in an inclusive context. Further surveys are needed to identify children not served by the school system. At

the same time, other private schools that have opened in the vicinity (at least partly due to increased demand generated by RMKM), have emerged as competing social forces trying to prevent the community from enrolling their children in a school 'of the disabled'. This might actually be seen as a positive attainment in that more entities are now talking about children's education than before!

- The growth in the number of children served by CBR has been from 237 to 283, with a greater increase in the percentage of girls. However, the major achievement is that as many as 39 children have been admitted in regular schools, while employment has been found for 53 students, which is a remarkable number.
- Classroom observation indicates a consistently high degree of engagement in the learning process, with children taking initiative to find their tasks and continue them.
- Social development is visible in terms of interaction, cleanliness, giving up of certain habits and ability to enjoy a more varied diet. A critical aspect is that of relationships among children – greater collaboration and teamwork is visible. From being afraid of children with disabilities, the 'normal' children can be seen interacting with and helping their disabled classmates at various points.
- Records, case studies and classroom observation bring out that there has been considerable improvement in children with disabilities, whether in physical, cognitive or social aspects. There is evidence that being with other, non-disabled, children has helped children with disabilities; this is most visible in the high number of disabled children who have found employment (due to their increased social development as a result of being in an inclusive setting).
- In the case of normal children, records and interaction indicate that despite being socially disadvantaged (and often having a traumatic government school experience) they have adjusted and are rapidly moving towards age and grade appropriate levels. Many of them are at levels better than found in typical government or private schools. Apart from improved learning levels, they appear to be able to think on their own, solve problems and work independently.

Impact on parents, family and community

The communities around Chachiywas, mainly Gurjar groups, have a low socio-economic status, very poor levels of education and a number of traditions that give low status to women. Living in 'govarhis (small habitations of 6-7 households), their decisions regarding children's education are taken by the gavarhi as a whole rather than by individual families or parents. The Raigar and Harijan groups around Beawar are marginally better in economic terms, with a more open atmosphere for women. The Gadia-Lohar in the same area, a migrant tribe that has now settled into slums, is organised around extended families where all decisions are taken by the head (mukhia). Child marriage is common among them, and they are not open to education of girls beyond even the age of 8 years, on ground of 'honour' being lost.

RMKM has reached out to the community in a variety of ways, and now has longer interactions that involve more discussion.

Enrolment and retention in RMKM schools is affected by decisions taken by the gavrhi or extended family heads, since all families follow their lead. Parents whose children are in RMKM schools clearly feel the impact on their children – they seem eager to study at home, know much more than before. Parents concerns include that fact that RMKM does not have government 'recognition' and that others (new private school owners) keep telling them not to send their children there. Even those who have not admitted their children or have removed their children from RMKM schools acknowledge that teaching-learning in RMKM schools is good. Raigar,

Harijan and Lohar groups feel that government schools mistreat their children and discriminate against them. They value the fact that RMKM teachers come to their homes to take the children to school or inquire after them if they are absent.

Overall, a slow shift is beginning to be visible. However, considerable work needs to be done towards enabling the community to be more open to education (and later to inclusion). Perhaps, despite their 'competitive' attitude, there is a need to involve the government and private schools in the area as partners to the extent possible.

Impact on teachers

From being sceptical to finding the process difficult, teachers in RMKM have not only overcome their fears but are emerging as good practitioners of inclusive education. The various training programmes, materials, exposure trips and on-site coaching/mentoring by RMKM functionaries have generated the following:

- Teachers are able to plan and prepare for a differential classroom in which different activities, materials are used.
- Greater skill in conducting activities is visible, with many activities being conducted simultaneously according to children's needs and levels. Teachers are also able to prepare materials such as worksheets accordingly.
- Apart from looking after children and their needs affectionately, teachers are able to give individual attention to children based on detailed information recorded by them about each child. A very high degree of patience is seen with children with disabilities.
- Maintenance of records about children has improved, as has the use of these records for designing and implementing learning processes.
- A collegial, collaborative spirit is visible among teachers, leading to greater synergy and output.
- From being 'disgusted' with the community, teachers are not at ease and able to relate with them, as evidenced in the community's views about the teachers.
- Teachers feel that the shift from special to inclusive settings has helped children, though there are still occasional doubts in certain aspects. The increased desire of the disabled child to participate in activities presents its own challenges.
- Among achievements, teachers list the following: change in communities' perceptions, the fact that first-generation children who dropped out are so clearly learning well here, and the fact that the inclusive setting is helping in mainstreaming children with disabilities (in terms of their increased employment prospects).

Impact on RMKM schools and the organisation

- In overall terms, RMKM schools have witnessed several improvements:
 - A more intelligent use of space for learning purposes
 - The evolution of the morning assemble as a special time for sharing and appreciation of each other
 - The greater availability and varied use of teaching-learning materials
 - Improved planning for the year, month, week and day
 - Regular and systematic recording / documentation that has evolved over the years and now contributes to ongoing improvement and learning.
 - Ability to work as a group
- There is much greater understanding of and conviction with regard to inclusive education (over special education).
- Professional practices from the inclusion project are now influencing other projects of RMKM – whether in terms of planning, the nature of meetings, or the reduced centralisation / hierarchy

now seen. The kind of collaboration visible in this project is now emerging across project teams as well.

- The project has brought about considerable change in RMKM's standing. Greater recognition by government agencies (and involvement in events such as conduct of training and Special Olympics) as well as the emergence of RMKM as resource organisation are now visible.
- RMKM's orientation of private and NGO-run schools has resulted in 5-6 of them admitting children with disabilities. RMKM has also developed an orientation module and conducted an orientation of an organisation wanting to make a transition from a regular to an inclusive school.

About the Study

With the three-year project drawing to a close in July 2008, this Impact Evaluation Study sought to assess:

- the nature of impact attained by RMKM's efforts, and
- the degree to which the key objectives have been attained.

Since the processes adopted have been reviewed and commented upon by others, this study focuses mainly on the outcomes and impact attained. The research design, methodology and indicators used may be seen in Annexure 1. The Study sought to establish the 'sphere of influence' within which the term 'impact' could be understood. Based on this, a rigorous analysis of documents, observation and interviews (with a range of stakeholders, including community members) was undertaken, as follows:

- Secondary data over the duration of the project was examined, with reference to children and learning attainment, classroom planning and teaching, teacher development processes, implementation reviews and the like. This yielded both quantitative as well as qualitative data, which was then validated through observation and field visits. (A list of the documents examined is appended.)
- A field visit was undertaken from 4-8 October to both the Beawar and Ajmer centres, where classrooms and community interaction were observed over four days.
- The team also interacted intensively with children, parents, community members, teachers, RMKM functionaries and others associated with these efforts. (The schedule of visits and a list of persons met is also appended, along with the tools used).

IGNUS-erg is grateful to RMKM functionaries, teachers, children of the schools, their parents and community members for the warm support extended to the study team.

How 'Impact' was understood

The degree to which key objectives were attained naturally served as a benchmark for assessing impact. At the same time, it was important to analyse what those in RMKM considered impact. Discussion with them brought out that impact needed to be seen in terms of difference made to the critical stakeholders (children, parents, teachers, community...) as well as in the different spheres of action (such as classrooms, school, the immediate environment...). This understanding influences the overall structure of this document.

I. IMPACT ON CHILDREN

Enrolment and Coverage

From a total of 89 in 04-05, the number of children in the school/day care centre has increased to 202 in 08-09, or around two and a half times. The greatest growth has been in the year 06-07, when the percentage increase was 41.46 (from 123 to 174 children). The fact that the growth

appears to be slow next year, 07-08, might indicate the influence of factors indicated elsewhere – namely, the negative campaigns against RMKM by fee-charging private schools whose catchments are being affected.

Table: Children’s Enrolment – School/ Day Care

Year	No. of special needs children				No. of ‘normal’ children				Genderwise Distribution		Total
	Chachiyawas		Beawar		Chachiyawas		Beawar		Boys	Girls	
	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G			
2004-2005	44	09	28	08	-	-	-	-	72	17	89
2005-2006	48	07	25	08	13	02	11	09	97	26	123
2006-2007	52	08	27	07	35	06	20	19	134	40	174
2007-2008	58	09	30	07	53	11	18	16	159	43	202

Apart from the 65 special children enrolled at the end of 08-09 in the Chachiyawas school, 52 children have dropped out over the five years from 04-05 to 08-09. The number of new children enrolled over these years is around 55. Thus, around 120 children have benefited from this programme, not including some who have moved on to higher grades or gained employment. An important feature is that over the years, the number of dropouts is less than the number of new admissions, pointing to an increasing trend in the school population.

In the case of normal children in Chachiyawas, while their overall enrolment increased from 13 in 04-05 to 34 in 08-09, dropout occurred only in 07-08 (16) and 08-09 (32). At the same time, the number of new children increased progressively from 2 in 05-06 to 29 07-08, declining to 9 in 08-09. However, as against a dropout of 45 over the five years, the new enrolment adds up to 63. thus, with the present enrolment the total number of children who have benefited from the programme is 108.

In terms of gender ratio, while the number of disabled boys has increased from 72-88, that of girls has marginally declined from 18 to 17. In terms of normal children, the number of boys has grown from 25 to 71 and girls from 11-27 (05-06 to 07-08). It can, therefore, be said that there has not been a major improvement in gender ratio (it has hovered between 19 and 22% girls). Given the social composition and the communities involved (detailed later), this will take more time and effort, particularly in the case of older girls.

The total number of disabled children reported in Ajmer district, for the year 2008-09 (by the SSA) indicate that of a total of 10342, around 40%, or 4209, are girls. In the case of mental disabilities too, the percentage is fairly similar, with 675 out of a total of 1626 being girls. This might indicate that RMKM needs to explore if there is indeed a number of unidentified / unenrolled girls in their catchment area and ways of increasing their percentage in their school. Interestingly, though, the number of children reported with disabilities within Ajmer city is much less compared to those in other blocks of the district (530 vs. figures such as 2000+ in a few, and close to 1000 in most of the other blocks). Within Ajmer city too the percentage of girls reported with mental disabilities is 20 (out of 72 children) implying that:

- RMKM’s overall coverage is fairly high
- The percentage of girls enrolled is not far from the officially reported figures.

Having said this, the reliability of figures from the SSA need to be established. According to DISE data, the number of children in Chachiyawas is only 100, whereas an RMKM survey revealed 254 children in the age group 0-14, of whom 120 were of primary education age. Of

these around 60 are in school. No disabled child attends any of the newly opened private schools in the vicinity. From Chachiyawas, only 2-3 disabled children are in the RMKM school, with others are from Ajmer city (local children are covered under CBR). Given that there is variation in the figures, RMKM could consider further surveys and other means to access children with disabilities or others not served by the school system that can be included within their fold.

Table: Children's Enrolment - CBR

Year	No. of special needs children				No. of 'normal' children				Total		Total
	Chachiyawas		Beawar		Chachiyawas		Beawar		M	F	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F			
2004-2005	91	33	68	15	05	03	18	04	182	55	237
2005-2006	117	37	67	15	06	05	16	04	206	61	267
2006-2007	135	46	44	15	08	06	11	04	198	71	269
2007-2008	136	51	46	17	08	06	12	07	202	81	283

In the case of CBR, the overall number of children has grown from 237 to 283, with the smallest increase in the year 06-09. This coincides with the year that saw the greatest growth (over 40%) in the number of children in the day school, indicated that RMKM staff was perhaps more involved with the work in the school due to increased enrolment. The percentage of girls in CBR has increased from 22 to 28, which is somewhat better than the increase in enrolment in the day care centres. The number of 'normal' children too has grown only from 30 to 33, as this was not the focus in CBR.

As can be seen from the table below, RMKM has also been able to bring in 47 children with disabilities in Ajmer into the inclusion fold over 5 years, and 12 at Beawar. Numbers of children offered different kinds of therapy also show a broadly increasing trend in most cases.

Table: Intervention - CBR

Year	Focus of therapy												Physio & Speech Beawar
	Physio		ADL		Academic		Vocational		Speech		Inclusion		
	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	
2004-2005	15	27	37	05	29	39	24	05	19	15	08	02	12
2005-2006	23	26	39	07	45	35	27	05	20	15	11	03	12
2006-2007	35	04	39	07	47	29	33	09	27	14	14	03	12
2007-2008	37	05	40	07	48	30	33	11	29	10	14	04	15

Key:
A - Ajmer
B - Beawar

Rehabilitation efforts have been fairly successful in RMKM. Over the four years from 04-05 to 07-08, 39 children with disabilities have been admitted to regular schools while employment has been found for 53 students, a remarkable number indeed.

Table: No. of Children Rehabilitated in Ajmer:

Year	Admitted to regular schools	Found employment	Other						Total
			Rail pass	Bus pass	Disability Certif.	Guardian ship	ASTHA cards	Aids & appliances	
2004-2005	05	11	21	26	35	-	-	-	98
2005-2006	07	11	-	18	23	-	02	-	61
2006-2007	12	04	25	22	56	-	07	13	139
2007-2008	02	05	19	27	18	-	02	08	81

Table: No. of Children Rehabilitated in Beawar:

Year	Admitted to regular schools	Found employment	Other						Total
			Rail pass	Bus pass	Disability Certif.	Guardian ship	ASTHA cards	Aids & appliances	
2004-2005	01	03	118	41	123	--	--	--	
2005-2006	02	05	--	--	--	--	--	--	
2006-2007	07	11	250	250	250	--	02	18	
2007-2008	03	03	295	242	390	--	13	27	

While the numbers above capture the physical targets, the sub-sections ahead describe the impact on children in terms of relationships formed, learning and social development.

Participation in the classroom - a high degree of engagement

RMKM's efforts to ensure active and inclusive learning has manifested itself in classrooms that reveal a high degree of engagement.

- Children take part enthusiastically in activities; ask on their own about what they should do (rather than remaining idle) – even a disabled girl who cannot speak knocks the table when her work is done, so she can get a next task to do.
- Earlier children tended to disturb each other but now, once children get their own tasks, they do not bother about others but get busy in their own work.
- Children seem to be taking initiative, and ask questions such as 'What do I do now?' as soon as they get free of any task.

Social development - a few indicators

- Children have now learnt how to greet others, say Namaste or shake hands. This is particularly more noticeable in the disabled children.
- Greater cleanliness may now be noticed in terms of the child's dress and hygiene. Washing hands before a meal is now common. Sitting appropriately is also seen.
- Children seem to poke good humoured fun at each other, and laugh together instead of getting upset or teased.
- Before joining school, children would do gambling with the money got from begging or stealing iron from shops. But now, this is not so. Attendance records and reports from their families show that these children come to school regularly and have dropped these habits. There were also many children who picked up the habit of eating 'gutka', but after joining school, this habit too has been lost.
- When children were admitted to school they were used to eating only a few kinds of foods – dalia (porridge) and milk-and-rice. But now, they have got used to a greater variety, and have started enjoying dal, vegetables, salad...

Relationships among children

Over time, the 'normal' children from the communities around the school have developed in many ways. Where they were earlier shy, quiet and withdrawn (noticed in two earlier visits), the following qualities are now visible. It needs to be pointed out that these are often not visible even among the 'elite' schools.

- Children do not hesitate to say anything to their friends, and talk without any fear.
- They give their opinions, point out mistakes made by one another, encourage each other ('shabash!') when some gets the correct answer.

- They talk about / discuss what the right or the wrong answer is, debate among themselves. It can be seen that they ask questions such as 'why did you do this?', e.g. if some one uses an abuse word.
- During games and activities, they look out for each other, take care of others who may not understand. They explain the instructions, or show how something is done. At times they even ask the teacher, "should I go and explain?"

Perhaps the above can be explained by the fact that the relationship between the disabled and non-disabled children has also undergone a sea change from the earlier time when the normal children were afraid of the MR children. Over time, the fear has been replaced with togetherness.

- The two groups of children can be seen having their tiffin together, helping the disabled children wash their hands for lunch, or putting on shoes for a child who is not able to, or helping the child move around. Working in groups is quite common.
- When the final bell rings for the day, the normal children don't rush out. Instead they help to get the special children to the bus. They pack their school bags and then take them to the bus.

Learning attained – children with disabilities

Significant physical and social development is visible in children with disabilities. Apart from the case histories maintained about children, interaction with various stakeholders produced numerous examples of improvement in such children. A few of these:

- Rakhi Prajapati: Admitted 2005, she could not walk, or hold any slim object and could not speak. Now – she walks from home to school. Can hold pen or pencil and write. Understands what is spoken to her and has started speaking. Can recognise numbers up to 100, and even do addition with carry over. Can read two letter words.
- A child who could not open his mouth and articulate a sound has, over 3 months of intensive effort from the teacher, learnt to speak out numbers from one to ten, around 10 words, and is able to recognise and even write some letters of the alphabet. Some children who could only recognise a few letters are now able to read some small sentences, can speak aloud numbers from 1-30, over one year. By all accounts, this is fairly rapid progress as these children had not been able to speak at all over all the years that they had been at home. Some of the case histories included later bring out this aspect.
- Hitesh: Admitted in 2005, could not hold anything. Would start writing but because he could not control his hands, the paper would tear. Could not understand anything spoken to him. Now – can hold a pencil and write in a notebook. Can understand spoken language and has started to work on basis of oral instructions. Has begun to recognise some letters and numbers.
- Another CBR child who is still not able to recognise some letters (like *ka* and *pha*, or similar shaped letters), and had been completely unable to any recognise any letter to begin with, is now able to count well, buy things of daily use from the shop and keep an account, and dial numbers from the mobile phone (including bringing them up from the phone book).

Case histories

Detailed case histories are maintained about all children. The few samples presented below are fairly typical. They bring out the painstaking progress and also indicate the success of inclusion – it is the presence of other ('normal') children that has helped these children. At the same time, there is evidence to show that the non-disabled children have also gained – both as human beings as well as students – by being with children with disabilities.

<u>Name:</u> Divya Manglani <u>Age:</u> 12 yrs <u>Family income:</u> 3000 pm <u>Date of joining:</u> 2/12/04	
<u>Situation at time of joining</u>	<u>Present situation</u>
Severe disability, CP + MR, delayed milestones, had no toilet control and violent behaviour, unable to sit still, could not walk, carry things or communicate with gestures due to poor motor capabilities	<p>By 2006: Progress seen - was able to walk 6-8 steps with support, had started to communicate through gestures and gained toilet control. Had lost the 'fear in her mind' and started to be happy in school, displayed curiosity and stopped laughing and screaming without cause.</p> <p>In 2008: Has started arranging blocks, can walk 10-12 steps without help, begun to climb stairs. Can now match colours. Is able to put on clothes with elastic on her own. Has started speaking 'mummy' and 'papa', can eat on her own and can string beads. Great change in her behaviour, can follow instructions.</p>

<u>Name:</u> Tribhuvan Rai <u>Age:</u> 09 yrs <u>Family income:</u> 20000 pm <u>Date of joining:</u> 01/07/05	
<u>Situation at time of joining</u>	<u>Present situation</u>
<p>Was born with Down's Syndrome, had jaundice on birth and delayed milestones. Lacked toilet control. Had no eye contact and would not reply to anything asked. Did not use language but had some gestures that could be understood only by parents. Very shy, would not be with anyone (including children) other than parents. Did not know to chew, and so had to have mashed food only.</p> <p>At admission, could not recognise objects, or follow instructions.</p>	<p>After one year on involved in the inclusive programme, many changes noted. The biggest change was in language - the child was speaking, and tries to recite 4 poems and even do the action involved. Has shown interest in drawing, plays computer games with support from parents at home. Can recognise size (big and small), put on shoes on his own, and likes to play with other children. At times, uses whole sentences. Can recognise animals, birds. Tries to reply to questions asked.</p>

<u>Name:</u> Pavan Singh <u>Age:</u> 17 <u>Family income:</u> very poor (father works in tea stall) <u>Date of joining:</u> 2005	
<u>Situation at time of joining</u>	<u>Present situation</u>
Delayed development. At time of admission, behavioural problems, abusive, violent, would run away from school, eat 'gutkha'. Had difficulty in walking, speaking, needed help for toilet, and no interest in educational activity.	After admission in the inclusive class, class 1 phase cards were followed. After initial difficulties, started to take interest in completing activities. Followed the normal children's example to take part in assembly activities, lunch and games. On reaching class to phase cards for class 2, began to work with

Learning attained – non-disabled children

Detailed records are maintained about the learning levels attained for each child, based on ongoing evaluation of learners' levels. An analysis of these records (of the normal children) reveals that they had varying starting points on entry. Older children who entered were often well behind their age and grade appropriate levels. After a relatively 'slow' first term, there appears to be greater progress in each term as captured in the learning objectives attained / textbook lessons successfully covered by the child. Interactions with children and a close observation of their work indicates that levels mentioned in the records are valid. In many cases, these are now better than those typically attained in government schools, and of the low-fee private school as well. Thus, the differential approach and the pedagogy/materials along with the school environment appears to help.

In addition, learning seems to have gone beyond the usual scholastic aspects:

- Children are able to understand and follow instructions for individual and group work. They have also learnt how to give instructions or to explain them.
- Children can draw pictures on their own –that is, think for themselves and then draw, rather than just copy. E.g. when a class 3 girl (normal) was free for a while, she asked the teacher, "Should I make a drawing?" The teacher, who was working with disabled children at the moment, said, "Go ahead." At this, the girl made a drawing. Later, the teacher saw that it was a human figure and asked, "Who is this?" The girl said, "It's you! And you are going to see the mela!"
- After a story from the textbook, a question involving 'why' was under discussion. 'Why did the farmer want to sell his horse?' Interestingly, children came up with their own reasons beyond that mentioned in the story. E.g. he wanted to buy a cow so that he would have milk, or he did not need to go anywhere on the horse, or that "he was so old that he could not get on to the horse anyway."
- Children would work with questions related to links across different events in a story. What happened next, and why – is what they would focus on. It was possible to see an engagement with 'cause and effect' aspects.

As with disabled children, the case histories of 'normal' children also reveal the distance travelled by them.

1. Banna Lohar: admitted 2005. Could not read and write; wore extremely dirty clothes. Would not listen to anything told by the teachers. Would tease the special children, and trouble them. Now – does monitoring of the class when called upon. Can read books of class 3 level, do sums of addition and subtraction. Takes care to maintain cleanliness and also reminds others. Cooperates with special children.

2. Sharda Lohar: entrance in 2005. could not read or write. Would keep roaming outside the class, not listen to teachers, and eat 'gutka'. Now – has learnt to read and write, notes down dictation. Can do addition, subtraction and multiplication with carry over, speak in standard Hindi. She does not eat 'gutka' any more and stops others from doing this too. Takes part in cultural programmes. Presented a solo dance in a programme of the municipality.

3. Sunny Bawariya: Joined in July 2008. Could not recognise a single letter of the alphabet. Knew counting up to 20. Used abuse words, would trouble special children. Now – can read words of

two-three letters, recognise numbers up to 100, do addition of two digit numbers, has begun subtraction. Does not use abusive language, and cooperates with children.

Deepak, turn-around truant

Deepak is a shy boy from the Raigar community. Has a pet parrot, and talks a lot to this parrot. Earlier, he studied in the government school at Krishna Colony, Beawar. But every now and then he would run away from school and come home. His parents were very worried about this. Now he is in the Sanjay Special School. On being asked why he left the government school, Deepak said that the teacher there pulled his ears, beat him up and said many things that made him feel bad (humiliated him, using caste as a basis). She went to the extent of telling him, "You should not come here."

Today this same Deepak is a regular student in this school and is above average in his studies. His family is very hopeful about him.

II. IMPACT ON PARENTS, FAMILY AND COMMUNITY

In the first stages of its efforts, RMKM has attempted to make education 'inclusive' not only for children with disabilities but for those disadvantaged in social terms as well. An understanding of the community that RMKM works in highlights the nature of issues involved.

The Communities

Around Chachiyawas

The Ajmer centre of RMKM has (normal) children coming mainly from the adjoining Chachiyawas village, while the disabled children are predominantly from Ajmer city, and from a higher socio-economic social group.

The normal children come from mainly Gurjar groups, with a few families that are Rajput or Bania. However, all the groups have similar income levels, with most being working class. Some work as drivers, petty shopkeepers, or do daily wage labour. Women work as labourers in the fields, leaving home early in the morning to return in the evening. During daytime, there are either old women or newly married women at home. People seem to be able to earn enough to manage, though they have to work hard. All families also keep a few milch cattle.

The life style of these communities is marked by traditions that are still strong. Women maintain purdah (ghoonghat) and cannot sit on charpoi or chair in front of any male, whether of their family or outside. Men take all the decisions with women having no voice. Women do not take part in weddings since it is a public function - in fact food is carried to their rooms. Similarly, festivals are also celebrated by men and women separately. It is also reported that most of the men are 'drunk by 6-7 pm.'

Of the 20+ households visited in this area, only one had a woman with grade 10 education - she was a Rajput, with most Gurjars not having been to school at all. Among the Gurjar men, there was only one who had reached grade 10 in the entire village.

The habitation is mainly in the form of 'govarhis', i.e. small collections of 6-7 households / families with around 30 persons each. The *gavrhi* of one caste has little to do with the *gavrhi* of another caste.

At Beawar

Beawar is a small town, though it has all the facilities that might be found in other, slightly bigger towns. However, there are many communities that are deprived of education even today. Chief among these are Raigar, Harijan and Gadia Lohar. It is children from these communities who study in the Beawar school, and are typically first generation learners.

Raigar and Harijan groups

The life style of Raigar and Harijan communities indicates that their economic situation is marginally better than that of the poorest groups. They are landless labourers, and might be vendors, with one or two working as 'fourth-class employees'. Every family has at least one pet animal - a cat or a parrot. The women of the communities appear more open - that is, they do not hide away or avoid speaking in the presence of a visitor. All families have their own *kuldevis* (family goddesses) and their own ways of worship. Belief in superstitions, ghosts and 'witch doctors' is prevalent.

The Gadia Lohar

The Gadia Lohar have a history of being a migrating community. They would move their caravans of carts along with the armies of the royal families they were connected to, their work being to prepare the weapons of the soldiers. In the Mewari Gate locality of Beawar, they are settled in great numbers, their slums beside the roads containing entire extended families. Each such family has 35-50 members on average, who all eat and live together. Any decision is taken by the family head (*mukhia*) and every member accepts this decision willingly. They are so strongly governed by their customs and tradition that even today they place a piece of straw near their pillow when they sleep. Most are daily wage labours who earn and eat. However, they are able to give up to Rs. 10 per day to their children for daily expenses.

This community gets its children engaged (to be married) at the age of 2-6. By 14-16, girls move to their in-laws' place. A sharp eye is kept on girls and harsh behaviour meted out to them. They have great sensitivity towards their honour, and do not like girls of 8-10 to be talking with boys of other communities. On being asked, they say, "These are bad times, if someone points a finger at us, life will be useless. We can always earn money, but once honour is lost, what is left to live for?" There is among them one family where a girl has become a teacher, but the community looks upon her as different from themselves and no one keeps relations with that family or even talks to them, regarding the family as 'moneyed'.

Reaching out to the community

Along with running its schools RMKM has made efforts to reach out to the community in different ways over the years, as the table below indicates. However, there has been a shift in that there is an effort to go beyond events such as puppet shows and exhibitions. Now, a longer programme of 5-7 days' duration is organised in the field, enabling people to gather and discuss. As rural CBR has started, there is shift from the earlier perception of CBR team as being 'maalish karne waale'!

Table: Community Awareness programs

Year	Category of Awareness Program				
	Seminars	Exhibitions	Melas	Puppet shows	Other
2004-2005		1	1	3	5
2005-2006	4	1	4	24	6
2006-2007	5	6	3	16	2
2007-2008	4	7	3	20	09

What parents say

Around Chachiyawas

The general impression in this community is that a good school is one where children wear ties and learn to speak in English. None of the community members know the name of the RMKM school or any other school in the area – they refer to them as ‘big’ school (as RMKM is known) or ‘angreji’ school or ‘sarkari’ school.

One family has four children in RMKM school, with the father being the driver of an ‘English school’ bus. The English school offered free education for his children but he refused, on grounds that his children were learning well [‘theek se’] in RMKM. He said that when children come home they look for a quiet place to go and do their work, which they never did earlier. They have got used to study, according to him. Two of his children had attended govt. school for two years, but this had never happened.

Those whose children do not study in RMKM school said that it is a ‘big’ school, where something or the other keeps happening, even a mela at times. But what else happens there, about this they did not have much to say.

The issue of joining a school, remaining there or leaving it is not entirely up to individual children’s parents. When a decision is taken in the govarhi, all members end up following the same – e.g. if it is decided that one child will go to a particular school, then all children in the govarhi will go to the same school. It is this that has affected the enrolment and drop out pattern at RMKM, especially when those from competing private and government schools are able to influence the community.

The following are the main views of those whose children study in the RMKM schools:

1. Children are in the habit of studying regularly at home. They run to the terrace with their bags; every day they do at least some work.
2. On being asked, they can answer many questions – such as related to simple addition and subtraction, and can give ‘hisaab’ on things bought from the market.
3. A woman whose niece had taken admission just a month ago, remarked, “The teaching is good; the girl has learnt many poems, makes pictures and is always doing something or the other. The teachers are good, and teach with affection. The girl also feels like studying (*mun lagta hai*).”
4. The community was of the view that our children study only where the teaching is good.
5. But some members also had doubts such as whether the school was ‘recognised’ and its certificate would be valid in other places.

We were able to interact with around 10 families whose children have left the school. All of them accepted that the teaching-learning in RMKM was good. On being asked why they had removed their children, their answers fell into three categories of reasons.

1. The government school and other schools in the neighbourhood keep saying that this is a school of the dumb and deaf, and that the school has recognition only for the education of such children – it is not for normal children.
2. There is only play and games (*khel*) there – reading and writing does not happen there. Children are not kept in discipline.
3. All the children of the *govarhi* (neighbourhood, habitation) got to other schools, so why should only I send my children to this school.

Around Beawar

Raigar and Harijan groups:

On the whole they seem more aware when it comes to the education of their children. What they shared about their children and government schools includes:

- Our children are not treated with equality / fairness in school. For the smallest mistakes, they are scolded and beaten as if they have committed great crimes. When children of other communities make the same mistakes, a different kind of behaviour is shown towards them.
- If a child is absent even for a day, he is beaten up. Many times the school would push the child out, saying, "You can't study, you are not capable of studying."

About RMKM:

Due to such reasons, many parents from these communities removed their children from the government schools and admitted them in RMKM school. About the latter, they said that people there treat their children with more affection. Children are developing the habit of studying regularly. If they miss school for even one-or-two days, the teacher comes home to find out how the child is. The biggest change is that children have begun saying that they want to study, and they will study. People of the community felt that this school is the right school for their children.

The Gadia Lohar and education

Discussion with them brought out that nothing is being done from the government's end for the education of this community. Not one of their children was in the government school. They said that they did want their children to study but the behaviour of the government school towards their children is not good, and their children keep running away from school.

Some 18-20 children from this community study in RMKM's Beawar school. The teachers of the school come to their homes to take the children to school. For this community, this is a 'big thing'. They refuse, however, to send girls of 14 and above. At the same time, they are strict with the boys about their studies. Today, the children from this community are regular in school and learning fast.

As can be seen, the above presents a picture of the complex task and the challenges that confront the idea of not just inclusive education but of education itself. RMKM has certainly made progress in terms of generating a fair degree of participation in education on part of communities that are often excluded and denied their basic educational rights. One of the fallouts of RMKM's efforts to increase the school-going population has been that local entrepreneurs have considered it viable to open private schools, leading to new 'competition'. This is adding to the difficulties innate to the effort and RMKM's future strategies would need to consider this. In other areas too, people have shown interest (to admit their children), but RMKM is not able to involve them because of the transport issue.

A slow shift is also reported in parents' mindset in terms of being affected by others' decision not to send their children to school. In some families, one of the parents may be ready while the other is not. There is need to work with women separately in this regard.

III. IMPACT ON TEACHERS AND CLASSROOM PROCESSES

This section is based on close observation of several classrooms in action, interaction with teachers (one on one as well as in a focus group discussion) and analysis of records. Notes of

earlier visits, meetings and workshops served as frame of reference against which the improvement attained could be arrived at.

The sub-sections below describe the impact of the various inputs into teachers (workshops, meetings, mentoring sessions, joint planning, exposure visits etc.). On the whole, given the limited educational backgrounds that many of these possessed – and the still fairly low levels of salary – the degree of skill and commitment generated appears remarkable.

Planning/ preparation and management

- Teachers are now clearly entering the classroom with much greater preparation beforehand. Material related with the work at hand, worksheets, planning notebooks and the like is usually found in their hands.
- The teacher is now able to create many kinds of needed inputs spontaneously. E.g. if a worksheet made beforehand does not seem appropriate, the teacher instantly makes an appropriate worksheet for the child concerned.
- Teachers are making better use of material in the classroom – as also the space, including the floor, to enhance learning.
- Around 2-3 different seating arrangements may be seen in the classroom – the activities are conducted according to phase cards, and follow the curriculum closely in keeping with the developmental stage of the child. E.g. even for introducing 3-digit addition and subtraction, teachers have been able to implement activities with concrete material fairly effectively.
- RMKM management also reported that whereas earlier it was necessary to sit every day with teachers in order to enable them to plan for their classes, some of the more experienced teachers do not need this input as much. Overall, the numbers of difficulties and doubts expressed by teachers seem to be less.

6.8.08, Beawar, Class 1, Teacher: Usha Chauhan, Children: 16

Children sit in a circle, with the teacher amid them. Normal and special children in this mixed class. Starts with a little discussion and question-answer on the work done the previous day. Children are already sitting in groups of 3-4. The teacher explains each group its instructions for the different tasks they will do. First she reaches a group of 4, carrying lots of pebbles and leaves with her. She draws some shapes on the floor and asks children to place a leaf and a pebble in each, according to her instructions. Then she reaches the second group. She gives each child pebbles and a worksheet containing numbers. This group was given the task of counting and identifying the numbers in the worksheet, and writing them down. The third group's task was to do drawing and the fourth group had written work on worksheets. There were four different kinds of tasks happening at the same time in the class. During this, the teacher was also making notes in her notebook.

The Skill to Conduct Activities

- Teachers are using plenty of concrete materials. From earlier times, when these were mostly materials brought in from outside, the change now is that locally generated materials are being used, in much greater quantities. This will help provide children a much more solid foundation in terms of learning.
- Oral activities are now able to sustain for much longer and children also appear to be taking part / discussing more. E.g. story telling and stopping from time to time for discussion. Earlier, this was difficult since teachers tended to run out of material very soon or be unable to get a response from children.
- Teachers appear more and more able to get different sub-groups of children to do different activities with the same class, including the use of different materials. E.g. in one class children

were seen classifying material, while others used material to count, as yet another group used worksheets.

- Teachers are also increasingly able to work in multigrade / multilevel situations, e.g. in one class some children worked on 3-digit subtraction on worksheets, some did 2 digit subtraction with concrete materials, and some others did single digit subtraction with concrete materials, with the teacher sitting with the last group.

Class 3, Teacher: Padam, 16 children, mixed class

The teacher wrote some subtraction problems on the board. Children had pebbles before them, and were also working on their slates. During this, the teacher took out some blank sheets and made worksheets for children, distributing to them one by one. The level of questions on the worksheets varied. Some had two-digit numbers, while some others were given one-digit numbers. Children got busy in their work. The teacher sat at the back of the class, working with one group. This group had children who had fallen behind the most in their studies.

Giving individual attention to children

- Teachers take care of children and their small needs. E.g. sharpening the pencils of children (both disabled and normal).
- Teachers record comments about every child, daily, in their diary, e.g. regarding their participation in the class daily, especially about disabled children. This is used by them for planning ahead. This enables them to create more individualised learning paths for children as needed.
- For the physically handicapped children, teachers looked after them as if they are their family members – carrying them from one place to another, or even their hygiene needs (which was earlier expected from 'dais' posted for the purpose).
- Teachers have detailed information about every child's past in the school, how they learnt and what they learnt (sequence), as well as about the family and home situation.

Teacher: Monica, class with special children

The teacher was teaching counting, involving counting pebbles and writing down the number. One child was not able to say 'two' ('do'). While his lips were moving no sound was coming. The teacher must have repeated at least 10 times – 'do'. Finally, the child said, 'do'. During this entire process, the teacher did not appear troubled or impatient even for a moment. She kept at it till the child said 'do' and also went and wrote it on the blackboard.

Patience and Confidence

There has been very visible growth in the patience that teachers display towards children, especially the disabled ones, as in the case mentioned in the box above. At times they have to hold the children's hand to enable them to even draw a line. Sometimes they have worked for 3 months to get a child to articulate a single word, or a letter or even just a sound.

It is important to mention here that the source behind this is different from the earlier more charitable 'special school' approach – there is now greater faith in the potential of these children, along with affection for them, as revealed in the interview with teachers.

Recording

- Along with planning, teachers also write comments about what they were able to do from the planned activities. Earlier it was more just a listing of events, but now the process and children's response are getting recorded.
- Teachers have a progress record about each child, their curriculum (as per phase card / IEP list) and how much has been learnt.
- They also work together on maintaining school records (such as registers of quarterly meetings) - it is not ignored by others on the grounds that it is the responsibility of the centre in charge.

Relationships among teachers

- Teachers develop their plans in cooperation with each other, help each other in making materials such as workshop, and often 2-3 of them run classes jointly (without disturbing each other or getting in each other's way). A good example of their cooperation can be seen in the morning assembly when all teachers together supervise and run the one-hour event.
- An important aspect is that teachers seek out one another's opinion and advice, and also offer their own in turn. They discuss children's problems together, especially in the situation that different teachers teach different subjects to the same child when they share notes
- Teachers visit communities in groups, where they can together conduct the discussions or exchange of information.

Evolving relationship with children and community :

- In the early days, teachers experienced a great deal of mental unease with children who did not seem healthy to them. This was especially with children who drooled or made odd noises or whose physical build was very heavy, different from 'normal' children. But this is not so now. Teachers are at ease and comfortable with them.
- Similarly when teachers went on community visits, they felt 'disgusted' at the way they lived. They would not be able to sit with them, or drink water at their place. But now the relationship with the same families seems comfortable. Teachers sit with them, behave in a more equitable manner, make enquiries about their home, in a friendly tone.

Teachers' perceptions

A focus group discussion was held with teachers. Some key outcomes are presented below.

On the shift from special to inclusion

Due to the continuing turnover, the group now has only a few teachers who were with RMKM when these were special schools. Their views:

- In shifting to inclusion, we had difficulties in the first year, but slowly we understood the activity based curriculum we are following; in the case of the mild and moderately disabled children, we saw more development in motor and social abilities.
- Earlier in working with special children we did not use activities. We learnt how we can do many things with the same activity which was good for the special children as well. Now working with special children I feel much better.
- In activity, special children started getting the kind of environment which they needed. Earlier it was very rigid kind of work. Now we work according to level of children, and focus on how

we can involve children. In social aspects, there has been a very big change in special children which is very important for these children. In language development, too, we have seen this. Some children are even motivated to move (walk around) after being with other children. Teachers are also able to involve these children in some activities.

On Challenges

- 'This work is definitely challenging. The disabled child also wants to take part and we are not always able to ensure this.'
- A teacher who is still fairly new (having worked in coaching classes earlier, and therefore having a greater examination focus) felt that 'the progress of normal children in terms of written work becomes less. The level of learning appears to be less. More time is needed for them.' This indicates, in a way, the 'base line' from which teachers start out.
- Inclusive schools often face the issue of parents of 'normal' children feeling that the disabled children are 'slowing down' their children. However, here the reverse may also be seen occasionally. As one teacher said, 'Activity based work is easy, but parents with special children say that their children's development level is not as much as earlier.' One possible cause is that many disabled children's parents here are from much 'higher' socio-economic groups.

Achievements

- There has been a great improvement in the community's views about education and RMKM. Earlier, the community was trying to keep their children away for fear, but now the admission process is happening on its own. Normal children were also afraid, and their parents worried that disabled children will beat their children up. As the community has seen the work here, the number of children has increased. The earlier thinking towards the school has changed.
- Parents also feel teachers in the government school do not teach their children, and beat them.. Many parents feel that there is good 'padhai' here. Our teachers go to the homes of the normal children who have come here, discuss education, and what they do at home. Because of this, too, parents feel that our children should go to school.
- We have been able to bring in children who dropped out of school and also addressed 'bhrantiyan' /misconceptions in society. In Mewargarh, Lohar children were not connected with education. Today there are literate children who can do maths. 'If we leave them they will definitely slide back, as they are first generation learners.'
- Learning levels have also been good. Children come here from government school who were in the 5th, but could not write numbers up to 10. However, they soon learnt numbers up to 100.
- With the SRTT fund we have been able to prepare children to mainstream, and have also connected them with employment (three children have been employed last month.) In the increased employment potential, being with normal children seems to help (due to greater socialisation).
- There has also been some government recognition (in that RMKM has been asked to conduct of foundation course for government teachers, and 8-9 batches have been completed)

IV. IMPACT ON THE SCHOOLS/CENTRES

While individual classrooms have improved, there has been an impact on the school as a whole. Apart from the various capacity building inputs incorporated in the project, the strategy used here was that of a phased and indicator based transition to inclusion and it has led to the following changes. In terms of this phase-wise implementation, the organisation has attained indicators of up to phase 3 and would need to move into higher phases in future.

Overall aspects

Space management: The use of space and seating arrangements have evolved over the course of the project. For example, areas not covered with durri are being used by children to write with chalk on the floor. Or, disabled children use mats or are seated on a bench in a corner in such a way that they can participate without getting in the way. On the whole, a more intelligent use of space is visible.

Morning Assembly: Every morning, number of different children get a chance to perform in this one hour session. Story telling, poems, discussion on stories and similar activities are encouraged – and are not done only by teachers but children as well. This has emerged as a special time of the day when all members are together, share, display talent and appreciate each other, and unite in celebrating their school.

Material: Material is available in sufficient quantity with each and every child, and used a great deal as well. This is in contrast to other schools where material may be displayed but is rarely available in the hands of children. In planning, teachers have begun including details such as the materials they are likely to need in different activities

Planning: The yearly, monthly and weekly plan of the school is decided beforehand, based on which teachers make daily plans in consultation with each other. The centre in-charge may holds daily meeting with teachers and plan along with them as needed.

Documentation: There is a systematic record maintained of all work undertaken in the school, including that by the children. Plans at different levels are available in written form in the registers. Similarly, there are records / registers related to various meetings, with proceedings. Photographs of children as well as their work are displayed from time to time on the school notice boards. Children's progress is also checked against the phase card. Recording related to children takes into account the overall as well as personality development. Their social development is tracked in particular, and there is evidence that the record is used by teachers to support the process. Worksheets filled in by children as well as their notebooks are filed chronologically for each child over his/her entire stay in school – this enables progress to be assessed against baseline at the time of entry, as well as against any similar previous period. It also provides a longitudinal record that would be valuable – both for supporting further progress of the child as well as for research purposes.

Over the years there has been an evolution in the kind of documentation available:

- In 2006, records tended to be formal, ritualistic and clichéd – mainly listing who was present and so on.
- In 2007, they now include a listing of who said what in the meeting
- In 2008, it has changed and focuses on what is needed for children, suggestions for improvement to have emerged.

The proceedings of the meetings and the planning register give evidence of this evolution.

Working as a group: When the project started there was a tendency for centralisation, with the centre in-charge or other manager issuing directives that bordered on orders. However, the present records, discussions and meetings with staff show that elements of group thinking have emerged, with the central manager not having as dominating a role as before. There is a definite feeling among all members in RMKM that they are together in developing their school.

Community members too are called from time to time for school events (e.g. exhibitions), and even felicitated at times. Suggestions for school development are taken from them.

V. IMPACT ON RMKM AS AN ORGANISATION

Overall, as the previous sections highlight, there has been improvement in RMKM's capacity to design, implement and manage IE at its own schools. Documentation of the project and its dissemination will enhance the spread of inclusion among other stakeholders in the education sector.

Impact on RMKM

Understanding of inclusion/confidence in inclusion

There is greater understanding and acceptance of inclusion among the staff. Earlier only special education was considered appropriate and those children, it was felt, could not study in normal schools. Now this feeling has gone. Now 'we advocate that it is not special schools but normal teachers who should be able to address their needs. Earlier also we had sent some children to normal schools, but we had doubts about whether the child would be able to settle there. But after this experience we are confident that CBR children will settle in normal schools.'

Regarding the discrimination against children with disabilities, 'we feel that if normal and disabled children are together from the beginning, the normal child will, in later life, have more understanding, knowledge and sympathy. Earlier we did not think this would be the case. We also did not expect the philosophy of the staff to develop.'

Professional practices from the Inclusive Education impact the organisation

RMKM management members report that the relationship between management and staff is now more inclusive – they discuss together if something does not work and there is less distance between each other, less hesitation. The consultants did observe this in their interaction with all staff members

In all other programmes of RMKM, too, unit-wise monthly meetings are compulsory. Earlier these tended to be ritualistic. Now the team coordinator has to plan with his team for a whole week. The nature of interaction is very different, as is that of planning, preparation, and discussion. Group problem-solving has increased.

In the inclusion project, staff always had an agenda for meetings with parents or any event. This has transferred to SHG programme. Earlier it was just 'going to a meeting'. Now there is better planning, along with an assessment of what has been achieved. Similarly, the kind of review done in the inclusion project (in terms of the extent to which we have been able to work with/help the child), is now also being done in the health related work.

The kind of collaboration that is seen in inclusion project is seen as people from different projects are go and help each other, especially in cross cutting aspects such as community work. So a person going to talk with the community about education, will also discuss micro-finance and vice-versa. Also, other projects, such as microfinance, are beginning to go beyond focusing on the individual and including the family and community – as it is realised that without this there will not be sufficient change.

Impact on RMKM's standing

Over the years, consistent implementation of inclusive education has improved RMKM's standing in the sector. There has been increasing support and recognition from block, district and commissioner level government officers, though it has not yet translated into support towards conducting a pilot programme in government schools. Under the SSA, RMKM has been asked to conduct the government teachers' foundation course and around 200 teachers have already undergone this training.

Other funding agencies, such as Vibha, have taken note of RMKM's effort in this regard and offered to support some aspects. RMKM has become a key organiser of Special Olympics, and parents have been more willing to have their children participate in these.

A Spin-off of teacher turnover at RMKM

While turnover of teachers has been fairly high in RMKM – and a recent spate of government appointments of resource teachers (a permanent job) removed some of the better staff members – on occasion those trained in RMKM might have an impact in the situation they now find themselves in.

Salim Mansuri is a teacher who worked with RMKM and evolved with the programme. About a year ago he was appointed as a resource teacher under SSA Rajasthan. He has been placed in Govt Upper Primary School, Topdara, Ajmer, a large school with around 375 children and 20 teachers. It is one of the 'integrated' schools (GoR has established one per district) where some 39 children MR children are shown as being enrolled. However there are no MR children, only about 5 'slow learners'. The identification of these children has not really been done properly – it is more of a budget issue, since they need to find disabled children in order to access budgetary provisions made for this 'integrated' schools.

The school functions like any other government schools – with teachers not really paying attention to children. The five new resource teachers appointed in this school, including Salim, are treated by other teachers as their assistants, and they teach 3-4 regular periods per day following the time-table without being able to ensure children's learning or introducing any 'integrated' practice.

Though the Government has posted 250 resource teachers in the state schools, it is not clear what their role is. A few months into his job, Salim was able to persuade the DEO support a survey for physical verification of numbers (of disabled children) mentioned in the SSA data, based on which resource rooms and other support activities may be initiated, including the shift in the role of the resource teachers from merely taking normal classes to supporting teachers include children with disabilities.

As work on the survey was being discussed, the DEO was transferred. However, Salim has not given up hope and will try to persuade the next DEO as well.

Improved readiness to influence and support other organisations

When the programme commenced, RMKM visited a number of NGOs in order to learn. The trend has now reversed and other NGOs have been visiting RMKM as part of their learning.

RMKM members are also invited as trainers and for developing training modules by others, including the SSA.

In order to generate awareness in other private schools of Ajmer city and NGO-run schools, RMKM organised a three-day workshop on Inclusive Education, in March 2007. Around 45 participant attended, of whom 5-7 schools have started admitting children with disabilities.

In another example of readiness to play a resource role, a team from RMKM conducted a workshop in Jhadola block, Udaipur from 22-25 September, 2008. This was for a Christian organisation running a normal school and wanting to bring in disabled children. Aspects covered in this workshop included: how to identify disabled children, the different kinds of disabilities, how to involve children, difficulties that there might be, and how to prepare teachers. Implementation aspects such as how to bring children to the centre, their assessment, development of the IEPs (Individual Education Plan), and how to include them inactivity with non-disabled children were included. The agency now plans to conduct a survey of the disabled children in their area, identify how many can attend the centre, and complete their assessment. It has asked for later support as needed.

This is likely to happen more and more. Towards this RMKM has begun preparing an orientation module for private schools (at present focusing on classroom processes, teachers and teacher preparation) and others wanting to implement inclusive education. A separate team needs is also emerging that may take this task further.