

ENROLLMENT DRIVES AND IMPROVEMENT IN SCHOOLS WITH COMMUNITY SUPPORT IN BORDER AREAS

In a nutshell: Various initiatives were taken by the district administration of Baramulla in Jammu and Kashmir to encourage students to attend, and to encourage parents to send their children to schools.

Nodal agency: District administration, Baramulla, Government of Jammu & Kashmir.

The Government of Jammu and Kashmir has conceived and implemented several programmes for improving the access and quality of elementary education in the State. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (flagship programmes), now merged, as Samagrah Shiksha Abhiyan is one such effort. One of the major interventions of the programme is the community participation in the management of schools.

The objective was to identify the sections of the community participating directly in the schools' management, create awareness in academic and non-academic activities, retention and re-enrollment of the dropouts and measures taken to regularize the students. One such great effort was taken by Deputy Commissioner, Baramulla with headmaster and staff of High School Katipora Zone, Tangmarg, of this district to increase the enrollment of the school. They started this effort by admitting their own children to the school. A major step that motivated the students and parents of the area to enroll their wards. At the school's Annual Day celebrations, they rewarded outgoing students for their excellent performances in the annual examinations by giving cash awards and certificates. The school also encouraged girl students to represent the school in various zonal and district level competitions such as sports, quiz and Naat. By virtue of the efforts by the headmaster and staff, they successfully increased the enrolment from 140 to 200 of their school.

Nambla is a village located 5 kms from Uri town on a hilly terrain near the Line of Control (LOC). There were about 200 out-of-school children in the age group of 6-14 in this village. The condition of the school was dismal, with only 6 rooms, and a part of the building was damaged during an earthquake. In June 2014, Mr Wali Mohammad Kakroo a local headmaster was transferred by the Deputy Commissioner, Baramulla and the CEO Baramulla to the school. Upon taking charge, he managed to take on board the local community, staff members and the School Development and Monitoring Committee members of the schools to generate funds for the damaged building. While the civil society donated towards this cause, the CEO Baramulla also released ₹ 5,00,000 which led to renovation of the damaged buildings. With improved facilities, the institution saw higher enrolment. The school's result also improved from 30% to 70%. In 2017 the school got 15 distinctions with one student securing 2nd position in the district by securing 95% marks in class 10th. The school also broke stereotypes by taking the extraordinary step to enhance the enrollment of girls. The headmaster conducted counselling of the parents to send their wards to school. The headmaster took the support of the local *Imams* to counsel parents and convince them of the importance of education for their children.

Impact

- Enrolment of the school increased from 200 to 698.
- Infrastructure of the school has improved with the establishment of science laboratory, library, additional classrooms, separate toilets for boys and girls and a herbal garden in the school campus.
- ICT lab was also granted by Ministry of Education and an additional computer lab of 13 computers was established locally.
- Sports infrastructure was made functional, as a result of which the school participated in various sports competitions at district and zonal levels.
- Parent-teacher meetings were made mandatory, which led to an improvement in the results.

Awards and recognitions

The district also received the Prime Ministers Award for Excellence in Public Administration in 2021 for this initiative.



Enrollment drives in schools at Baramulla