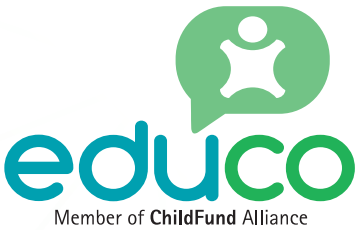
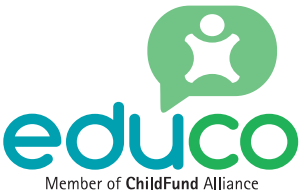
Country Plan

Educo-India

2017 - 2019





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सुविचार :- अहिंसा हाच धर्म आहे आणि तोच यशस्वी जीवनाचा मार्ग आहे
विषय - मराठी
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BABY PATROL

1. Mission, vision, values and principles

Our Mission: We work with children and their communities to promote just and equitable societies that guarantee their rights and wellbeing.

Our Vision: A world where all children fully enjoy their rights and lead a life of dignity.

Our Values inspire our Mission and help us to interpret it.

Social commitment: We strive for the common good, in defense of human dignity, working together to build relationships based on fairness and solidarity between peoples, individuals and cultures.

Equity: Our actions aim to achieve greater justice in social arrangements and to promote people's ability to enjoy their freedom.

Respect: We recognize and defend the human diversity as an essential value for social cohesion, peace and respect for the dignity of all people.

Our Principles are operating standards that guide our actions and their adoption and implementation is obligatory and should be demonstrable.

Participation: All our actions guarantee and promote the right to participation of children and those who support them, in pursuit of full citizenship. We also foster a participatory culture within our organization.

Non-discrimination: Our work is built upon the belief that all children should have the opportunity to fulfill their rights, irrespective of their or their families' national, ethnic or social origin, language, religion, political opinion, economic position, differences in ability or any other status.

Transparency: We base our work on honesty, responsibility and maximum access to information regarding the management of resources and the impact of our actions, in pursuit of the highest level of social and economic accountability.

Dynamic spirit: We have the capacity to adapt and be creative in our response, seeking innovation and quality in our action.

2. Executive summary

The year 2017 has been significant for Educo India for consolidating our work in the state while building newer strategic partnerships and going deeper in the existing project communities at the same time.

On one hand we brought new strategic partners on board like CORO and PRERANA and on the other hand we got deeper into community engagement and advocacy spaces in Matruschaya and Masoom. With CORO-Educo partnership we hope to facilitate 50 model communities which will develop mechanisms to stop violence against children (VAC). The partnership with PRERNA is for two projects - VOCSET & SANMAAN. While in SANMAAN, we will be working with the children begging on the streets of Mumbai to ensure their basic child rights by linking them with the mainstream to get their access to education and safety. In VOCSET, we will be working with children of commercial sex workers for their education and providing them safety and alternatives in life.

Among the ongoing projects, in Matruschaya, the focus has been to move deeper into community engagement and bring the community to the foreground for ensuring the Right to Education for their children who are otherwise institutionalized for continuing their education. A slightly different intervention was continued in the rural Maharashtra with the marginalized communities who go on seasonal migration every year taking small children along thus putting their basic rights into jeopardy. A study was commissioned in Beed to understand the pattern of migration and possible strategies to stop children from migrating with their families. In Masoom, we moved into the advocacy space with deeper engagement with the education department and local municipal authorities for facilitating the Government Resolution (GR) in favour of continuation of night schools in the state. The organization entered an MOU with the government to use their model statewide.

2017 has also been the year for model building especially as we moved into Child Protection Space with our programme for child-led child protection policies in the state with our partners PRATHAM and Save the Children India (STCI). The Educo India team worked closely with an eminent child protection specialist to develop our module to train the children, parents, teachers to work towards protection of children while we also worked on child safeguarding policy at the organizational level. Another strategic and important initiative has been the initiation of education for dignity which is a core element of Educo's work globally. Currently we are in the process of conducting assessment of our work in the state and will be coming up with our core programming strategy with integration of education, protection and governance as we feel it is important to see the issues as cross cutting and stand-alone issues for the development of children. This year Educo has also stepped into space of innovations and experimentation by developing a prototype on children's wellbeing from children's lenses, which is an experiment being conducted at a few selected schools in rural and urban schools through Art and Play as the means and tools for the same. This exercise will give Educo an experience of working on a rights-based approach with

the child-friendly and innovative tools. We have also pursued different monitoring frameworks for developing a result-based project monitoring and evaluation framework which will be tested and finalized in the coming year. In a nutshell, 2017 has been a year for the strategic shift from a regular need-based service approach to an innovative and child rights-based approach.

ABOUT THE COUNTRY STRATEGY PLAN:

The India Country Strategy plan began late due to some systemic issues. The plan presented below is based on the global Educo Strategic Plan (2015-2018) with a timeframe from 2017 – 2019.

This Country Plan has the following distinctive features:

- Responsive and participatory programs that facilitate the child's right to access quality and
- Transformative education, with coverage of children from the earliest stage and special consideration for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups
- Active participation in and collaboration with like-minded alliances, networks and consortiums at the local, regional and national levels
- Evidence-based programming and interventions through research and established information systems
- Integration of a comprehensive and child rights-based Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning system
- Executing these responsibilities is the Country Team, whose capacities are continuously supported and updated through training, and whose direction and commitment are guided by the core institutional principles of Participation, Non-Discrimination, Transparency and Dynamic Spirit.

3. Context

INTRODUCTION

Educo is a global development NGO with over 25 years' experience acting in defense of children and their rights, and especially their right to an equitable and quality education. Working in 16 countries in 3 continents—Africa, America and Asia— and in Spain, Educo envisions a world where all children fully enjoy their rights and lead a life of dignity. As a member of the ChildFund Alliance, an international network of NGOs working in favour of child protection, Educo participates in the global movement to secure children's rights.

In 2000, then known as Intervida (Fundación Privada Intervida), Educo started working in Maharashtra, India. Its projects in India, as in other countries, followed a "sponsorship" model where individual donors (sponsors) were linked with individual school-going children they supported through donations. These children belonged to poor and disadvantaged communities and the support from individual donors was translated into projects whereby all children in the schools that "sponsored children" attended benefited. The projects focused on providing teaching-learning materials, uniforms, cash support in case of medical emergencies and so on. Educo has supported school-going children in over 400 schools with such support until about 2013 when through an internal process of reflection and realignment in the lead up to the Sustainable Development Goals, the organization embarked on a journey to redefine the way it works.

A rights-based approach was adopted and the first Educo Strategic Plan for the period 2015-2018 identified three strategic development goals, which centre on the Right to Education, Right to Protection and Governance.

In India, as well, the organization embarked on a journey to redefine its work and in 2014 a Child Rights Situation Analysis on the Right to Education and Non-Discrimination in Maharashtra was conducted. Simultaneously, all schools supported by Educo were assessed for their alignment with the principles of Child-Friendly Education. The evidence indicated that despite higher development indicators for Maharashtra there are pockets of exclusion in the state, with children living and working on the streets, children on the move (with or without families), children affected by migration, children of victims of trafficking and children in institutions being deprived of their rights. Evidence also indicated that while Mumbai may be the shining star of India's progress, Maharashtra also hosts the district with the lowest child sex ratio in the country, because of sex selective abortions (Beed). 80 percent of the schools supported by Educo, which included both public and low cost private schools, did not meet minimum standards of providing child-friendly education. Evidence from both assessments has informed Educo in shaping its future projects and indeed, the design of Educo's first ever strategic plan for India described in this document.

CHILDREN IN INDIA

India is home to 472 million children under the age of 18 years, comprising 39 percent of the country's total population. Children in India live with deeply unequal access to basic rights. Realization of their rights is contingent upon their position in a continuum of hierarchies related to income, gender, social status of their family (caste, tribe, religion) and political importance, or lack thereof, of their community (visibility, electoral constituency, conflict). Children are not an electoral constituency and their rights have remained neglected in the political discourse in the country. A male, able-bodied, child born to parents from higher castes who are employed in the formal economy, living in a relatively safer community, attending a child-friendly school, has higher chances for realization of his rights as compared to a female, differently-abled child born to homeless parents from a nomadic community that has migrated to an urban area and survives by working on daily wages in the informal sector or by begging.

The former is not the story of most Indian children as the macro picture of India as a trillion-dollar economy (2007-08), and still growing at the rate of at least 7 per cent, would have you believe. Regional disparities in Human Development are a reality world-wide, with income disparities widening between and within nations. India is no exception to this rule except that camouflaging of deprivation by the image of "India Shining" has harmful consequences for children deprived of access – rendering marginalized children even more invisible and lack of attention or worse, reduction of efforts to include them in the development and growth trajectory.

The reality of India's macro-economic progress coexists with another reality where the rate of malnutrition in the country is greater than that in sub-Saharan Africa, a region where most countries have a level of per capita income lower than that of India[1]. Notwithstanding the high rate of economic growth in terms of GDP (Gross Domestic Product) India's ranking in Human Development Index (HDI) continues to be as low as 130 out of the 188 countries and 97 out of 118 nations in Global Hunger Index (GHI).

Nowhere in India is the contradictory coexistence of extreme wealth and poverty as stark as in Maharashtra, the state where Educo has been working for nearly 2 decades. Maharashtra is the second most populous state in the country and even as slightly more than half the population lives in rural areas, Maharashtra has the highest urban population in the country and the fastest growing at that. Within Maharashtra, per capita income in the region of Marathwada is 40 percent lower than the rest of Maharashtra and in Vidarbha region 27 percent lower[2]. While Mumbai, the capital of Maharashtra, is home to 28 of the 100 billionaires in the world (2014), at least 30 percent of Mumbai lives on less than $1.25 a day. The Human Development Report of Mumbai remarked that "two segments (of the Mumbai population) occupy completely diffe-

1 IHD - UNICEF (2011) Working Paper Series Children of India: Rights and Opportunities. Retrieved from www.ihdindia.org.

2 Government of Maharashtra, Planning Department (2013), Report of the High-Level Committee for Balanced Regional Development Issues in Maharashtra.

rent economic, physical, and social spaces even as they share a geographical territory...two cities existed within one[3]."

Another significant feature of Maharashtra's development is that the situation of the Dalit and tribal communities is worse in comparison to some of the other states. Landless agricultural labor, farmers in the drought prone districts, tribal communities in remote locations, nomadic tribes and denotified tribes are highly marginalized. Communities such as the Pardhis, Katkaris, Dombaris, and Kanjarbhats are not only deprived but also discriminated against. Children from these historically marginalized and discriminated communities form the "last mile" that comprises Educo's focus group for this strategic plan period.

Education

One third of the world's illiterates live in India and despite strides in enrolment rates, a large proportion of children in India do not complete five years of primary education and even fewer complete eight years of compulsory elementary education. Official data shows that across all the social groups, male and female literacy was higher in urban areas compared to rural areas; and the Scheduled Tribes had the lowest literacy rate (61.9 per cent) and a gender gap of 24 percentage points.[4]

Elementary education—for children in the age group 6-14—has only recently been made a "right"—free and compulsory—enforceable by law (RTE-Right to Education Act, 2009). Though the demand for education has improved, learning outcomes for children are wanting and community participation in governance of schools is lacking. According to the Maharashtra Human Development Report (2012), "there have been improvements in the inclusion of marginalized groups including female children and children from backward social groups in school (enrolment). Yet the quality of schooling is an issue that needs to be addressed urgently".

Access: Notwithstanding the official data on improved enrolment and retention, a Child Rights Situation Analysis on Education and Discrimination (CRSA) conducted by Educo in five districts of Maharashtra revealed that right to education in the state was marred by obstacles stemming from poor response from the system and pockets of exclusion where most vulnerable children continue to be deprived of their rights. Distance from home to school ranked amongst the most common reason reported by children for being out of schools, with girls being disproportionately affected by distances and lack of physical access. The research also found that lack of access to preschool had a positive correlation with children being out of school. Preschool education is not yet an entitlement in India and neither is secondary education. The biggest drop

3 Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai (2009), Mumbai Human Development Report 2009. Retrieved from http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/reports/269/hdr_2009_en_complete.pdf

4 National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) (2007-8), India - National Sample Survey 2007-2008.

in enrolment happens at Grade 8, after which access is further diminished and when opportunity costs of education for children from vulnerable families are heightened.

Early marriage, household responsibilities, sibling care and violence against women and girls rated high as barriers to girl child education in urban and rural contexts. Being forced into exploitative labour was another key reason for dropout rates being high amongst children from low income families (both urban and rural areas, both for boys and girls). 23 percent of the sampled children also stated migration in search of livelihoods as a key reason for dropping out of school. Children affected by migration (seasonal in rural areas and continuous or permanent in urban) reported disruption and discontinuity in their schooling, eventually causing them to drop out.

Surveyed children reported facing discrimination by teachers because of their gender and/or ethnic identities as well as because of their poor learning outcomes. 90 percent of the children covered by the research stated that they or their fellow students had faced corporal punishment in school. Children also reported that traditional teaching-learning practices that did not include activity-based learning made their classroom experience uninteresting.

Learning outcomes: A significant challenge to the right to education in India is that even though children are enrolled in schools and attending "regularly" their minimum learning outcomes are far from encouraging. Nationally, only 42.5 percent of children in Grade III in rural areas can read at least Grade I level text, only 25.4 percent of Grade III children could do a 2-digit subtraction[5]. In Maharashtra, in the rural areas, about 40 percent of children in Grade V could not read a Grade II level text and only 34 percent of children in Grade V could recognize numbers under 100[6].

Community participation and accountability: The CRSA concluded that a main factor causing violation of children's right to education is that neither the rights-holders (children and their guardians) nor the duty-bearers (education and school authorities, the local government and guardians) perceive education to be a right. Parents rarely identified gaps in service provision as a barrier to realization of children's rights to education, exclusively attributing poor education outcomes to their own socio-economic conditions. The inability to identify service providers—local education authorities and schools—as primary duty bearers, is an indication of low awareness, low expectations and low demand for the rights of children, contributing to continued rights violations. Duty bearers on the other hand do not acknowledge their responsibility and blame the "illiteracy" of parents of first generation learners and lack of interest among children for poor education outcomes. A combination of challenging circumstances faced by children and their families and failure of the education system to deliver is responsible for the violation of children's rights to education.

5 Pratham Education Foundation (2016). Annual Status of Education Report (Rural) 2016. Retrieved from www.pratham.org
6 Pratham Education Foundation (2015). Annual Status of Education Report 2015: Maharashtra (Rural). Retrieved from www.pratham.org

Protection

Violence against children: An official study on child abuse and exploitation in India concluded that across different kinds of abuse, it is young children, in the 5-12-year group, who are most at risk of abuse and exploitation. The study found that two out of every three children surveyed in India were physically abused, more than half the children had faced sexual abuse and every second child reported facing emotional abuse. Over 50 percent of children were being subjected to one or the other form of physical abuse and among those physically abused in family situations, 89 percent were physically abused by parents. After parents, school teachers were the most commonly reported perpetrators of violence against children with two out of three children reporting that they experienced corporal punishment in schools. Among children who reported being sexually abused, half of them reported that they knew the person who sexually abused them and the adult was a person responsible for their care and whom the child trusted. Children on street, children at work and children in institutional care reported the highest incidence of sexual assault.

Data on violence against children in Maharashtra reflects the national scenario. A recent opinion poll on violence against children conducted with children in Maharashtra indicated that children were most vulnerable to violence at home and at school (Play it Safe, UNICEF 2016). While boys face more physical and psychological abuse (59%), girls reported facing neglect (being ignored - 52%), discouraged from studying (64%), or negatively compared to others (52%). The poll also showed the differences in how children are being treated depending on whether they are in urban or rural locations. It was shown that children from rural locations are more likely than children from urban locations to face violence: of the children who were hit with an object, 72% were from a rural area, whereas only 28% were from an urban area. Children who were kicked: 71% from rural, 29% from urban. Children who were scarred with burn wounds: 79% were from rural, 25% were from urban. Children who had their ears twisted: 75% were from rural, 21% were from urban.

Violence against children is not seen as a serious human rights violation by children or their duty bearers (Play it Safe, UNICEF 2016). Children report feeling defenseless and disturbed by the physical assaults committed by either parent figure, unsafe in their communities and they feared travelling to school (Ibid). There is low awareness, understanding and acceptance of progressive laws (such as on age of marriage or on corporal punishment) and hence poor implementation. Where there is awareness of the laws, there is rejection of the laws as they are often perceived as "foreign", "ill-informed" and an "annoyance". Caregivers and duty bearers routinely find ways to silence any protest or action (misreporting age of child, blaming child for false evidence). Panchayats, SMCs and VCPCs lack commitment to protecting children and are ill-prepared to fulfil their obligations to child protection. Appointed custodians of children fail to defend them, thereby perpetuating violence against them.

Discrimination against girls: A most stark indicator of violation of children's right to protection is skewed child sex ratio and Maharashtra's child sex ratio is among the worse in the country at 883 females per 1000 males, while the national average is 914. What is alarming is that the child sex ratio has fallen from 913 to 883 between 2001 and 2011. Beed district of Maharashtra has the lowest child sex ratio in the country (801)[7] and districts Beed and Satara have the highest female infanticide rates in the state[8]. In 2014, Maharashtra accounted for the second highest number of cases of child rape, the highest reported incidences of assaults on women and the second highest for reported cases of sexual harassment in the country (National Crime Record Bureau, 2014).

Child labour: Maharashtra has the second highest number of child workers in country (4.96 lakh, Census 2011) with one in seven workers in the state being under the age of 18. One in four child workers in the seven to 14-year-old age group in Maharashtra cannot even write their name (CRY) and there has been a 37 per cent increase in child labourers in the category of five to nine-year-olds in the last ten years in the state (CRY).

Although official figures indicate that child labour in India and Maharashtra is on the decline and that the incidence of children living and working on the streets in Mumbai (once considered to host the largest number of street children in the world) have declined, a large proportion of children continue to work, especially children over 14 who have no legal protection from working. India is also home to the largest number of working children, with about 50 percent of children reporting that they worked seven days a week[9]. In Maharashtra, among children who reported working, a majority worked in agricultural fields and with or as part of family labour, half of them reported not being paid for work and 20 percent reported that they did not get days off from work[10]. According to one estimate, 37,059 children live on the streets of Mumbai, 30 percent of whom are females. 65 per cent of street children lived with their families in temporary structures[11]. Every two out of five children witnessed verbal, physical or sexual abuse, torture and forced starvation. Around 24 percent of children of the school-going age were illiterate. Nearly 24 per cent of street children were engaged in work[12].

Child marriage: Child marriage remains widespread in India, where about 30 per cent of all women 20-24 years of age were married before reaching their 18th birthday[13]. Maharashtra has the 5th highest rate of child marriage in the country (2011 Census), with Beed being the district with the highest child marriage rate in the state (51%), more than Bihar and Haryana, closely fo-

7 Census Organization of India (2011), Population Census. Retrieved from www.census2011.co.in
8 India Today, 2012
9 Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India (2007), Study on Child Abuse: INDIA 2007. Retreived from www.childlineindia.org.in
10 Mumbai Smiles Foundation, UNICEF and NINEISMINE (2016), Play It Safe: An Opinion Poll of Children on Safety in Maharashtra. Retrieved from www.nineismine.in
11 ActionAid and TISS (2013), Making Street Children Matter: A census study in Mumbai City
12 Ibid
13 Jha, Jyotsna et al. (2016), Reducing Child Marriage in India: A model to scale up results, Centre for Budget and Policy Studies and United Nations Children's Fund, New Delhi.

llowed by the districts of Nandurbar (24%) and Satara (23%)[14]. There is also positive correlation between bonded labour system of employment in sugarcane farms and child marriage—because only couples are hired in the sugarcane farms, girls are married off before the age of 18.

Disasters and vulnerability: In a study of nine states affected by drought (including Maharashtra), in the year 2015-2016, almost 40 million children under five years of age in the rural areas were identified as being in the throes of drought. 28 of the 36 districts in Maharashtra were declared drought-affected in 2015-2016 and the NHFS data for this period indicates that over 46 percent children under five in rural Maharashtra were stunted and 36 percent underweight[15]. Intense involvement of children in water collecting activities has disrupted their education, more for girls than boys. Increased family-based seasonal migration, mainly to sugarcane belts, had resulted in more children dropping out of mainstream education. The hostel facilities initiated by the Government of Maharashtra for children of seasonal migrants were utilized only by very few children, mainly boys[16].

Children on the move: Nearly 30 per cent of the total population of India are internal migrants and of these, 15 million are children (under 18)[17]. While a larger proportion of children migrates with their families there is a significant proportion that is unaccompanied. While some migration is of a permanent nature (where families only return to their home village during special occasions), a large part of migration in Maharashtra is seasonal where children generally accompany their parents from farm to farm or from one construction site to another in search of work for a period of about six months in a year after which they return "home". Due to the peculiar out-field nature of the work in such employment, these children tend to live in the open and are without any shelter. The education system has not been able to come up with an effective system for ensuring the right to education of children affected by migration.

Governance

The most transformative aspect of UNCRC which has been ratified by Government of India already in 1992 is that of children's right to participate in decision-making processes that may be relevant to their lives and to influence decisions taken in their regard within the family, school and community. Children's right to participation is an integral part of the fulfillment of other rights, right to protection and right to development as well. While the government of India is duty bound to create structures and procedures for such participation, not much has been done

14 International Institute for Population Sciences (2015-16), National Family Health Survey, India. Retrieved from http://rchiips.org/NFHS/factsheet_NFHS-4.shtml

15 UNICEF India Country Office, 2016. When Coping Crumbles Drought in India 2015-16. Retrieved from http://www.unicef.in/Uploads/Publications/Resources/pub_doc141.pdf

16 Ibid.

17 National Sample Survey Office (2010), Employment and Unemployment Situation in India 2007-8. Retrieved from http://mospi.nic.in/sites/default/files/publication_reports/531_final.pdf

in this regard in India. Some of the states have pioneered in institutionalizing children's right to participation—Goa for instance, has enacted a 'Children's Rights Act' and the state of Karnataka has made it mandatory for local governments to engage with children through an annual consultative process.

In Maharashtra, the state rules for implementation of the Right to Education Act has made it mandatory for School Management Committees to have at least two student representatives, one of whom should be a girl[18]. Maharashtra Child Policy (2014)[19] has laid down as one of its principles, consultation and participation of children, in an age appropriate manner, in all matters affecting them and one policy directive has been that children's organizations/clubs shall be created in all the schools, villages, institutions, housing societies and Bal panchayats (children's parliaments) will be set up at the level of villages, block, district and state, to enable children to voice their concerns. It also directs that all child protection programs/protocols/processes shall have a facility for interaction with and participation by children.

Another initiative by the Government of Maharashtra is the Meena Raju Manch which is a forum for boys and girls in schools that seeks to address inequitable gender attitudes and to enable more participation of girls and boys in school activities. Launched in 2012-2013, the program is now universalised with all schools required to form these forums and follow curricula developed to address gender and power dynamics with school children.

Children's right to participate is an evolving concept in India, including in Maharashtra and while some spaces have been created for children to participate and some encouraging examples of children's association defending their rights have emerged, there is a long a way to go in practicing this, both by the state and the civil society.

18 Right to Education Act 2009, Maharashtra RTE Rules. Retrieved from http://righttoeducation.in/resources/states/maharashtra
19 Government of Maharashtra, Women & Child Development Department. 2014. Child Policy. A commitment on child development in Maharashtra through holistic, integrated and planned approach. National Sample Survey Office (2010), Employment and Unemployment Situation in India 2007-8. Retrieved from http://mospi.nic.in/sites/default/files/publication_reports/531_final.pdf

4. Educo's sustainable change approach

Our efforts seek to ensure effective fulfillment of child rights within the framework of International convention that regulates them (the Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989, hereafter CRC), and the utmost wellbeing of all children.

CHILD WELLBEING

In our understanding of child wellbeing, all girls and boys have the opportunity to be and do what they choose by exercising and fulfilling their rights. Child wellbeing is, therefore, an ideal framework for evaluating our progress towards more just societies.

CHILD RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH

We adopt a Child Rights-based Approach as the framework that intrinsically links child wellbeing with the enjoyment of their rights. We call on those national and international structures whose responsibility it is to uphold those rights to support our development activities, and we particularly underline the need to strengthen the state's capacities to fulfill their commitments to child rights and to be held to account for their actions.

The approach implies the application of the four basic principles of the CRC in all our actions. These principles are:

1. Nondiscrimination;
2. Best interest of the child;
3. The right to survival and development;
4. The right of children to freely express their views in all matters that affect them and have their views considered. This approach also incorporates the concept of equity, which means giving priority to those groups that find themselves in situations of vulnerability and/or discrimination.

AGENTS OF CHANGE

We consider that social actors can be classified into three categories: rights-holders (children and adolescents), secondary duty-bearers (families, communities, civil society, the private sector, etc.) and primary duty-bearers (States and International bodies). Each one of these actors should become an agent of the desired change by taking direct action to address rights violations and gaps, reinforce institutional mechanisms and build the capacities of communities and civil society in their respective spheres. The role that children and adolescents play in this process, that is, their degree of involvement and responsibility, varies in accordance with their evolving capacities.

All our activity is based on an approach that clearly states our way of working, how we understand and address the existing reality, who we work with and where.

HOW WE WORK

Proximity: we prioritize local efforts with close collaboration with the communities, civil society actors and public institutions that are in direct contact with children and adolescents.

Sustainability: We support children and their communities; however, under no circumstances do we substitute or play the role of the State. All our programs and projects are, from the onset, aimed at addressing the structural causes of vulnerability and exclusion so that their positive impact will last long into the future.

WHO WE WORK WITH

We mainly work with the following actors:

- **Children and adolescents:** Children are our priority, particularly those from the most vulnerable and excluded groups, and paying special attention to girls.

- **Local communities:** Our priority commitment to children should be grounded in collaborative efforts with local communities to support and guide them along the road to transformative and sustainable local development.

- **Local, national and international civil society organizations:** We prioritize alliances and joint efforts with civil society organizations on collaboration and mutual support.

- **Local, national and international governments and public institutions:** Our actions are framed by the principles that guide international development initiatives in accordance with the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (ownership, alignment, harmonization, results and mutual accountability) and are consistent with development strategies and public policies of our countries. We seek alliances with public institutions that contribute to achieving our objectives within a framework of promoting human rights.

- **Support base:** An organization driven by the social concepts justice and solidarity, Educo relies on the support of its collaborators. To strengthen this relationship, we work to establish closer ties and communication with our supporters, seeking to increase their commitment to solidarity, as well as their active participation in our organization's work. We regard sponsor ship as a tool for linking people committed to solidarity and children in vulnerable situations, which makes it an effective means for raising awareness in pursuit of a more just world.

  This relationship is bidirectional and based on mutual respect. As such, sponsorship is fully integrated in our programs and projects, taking on a community approach and working with children and their families from an early age.

WHERE WE WORK

For the period covered by this Plan, Educo has established a geographic framework for action that is based on vulnerability criteria, the Human Development Index and the principle of maximizing the impact of our work. We are working globally in 17 countries in four continents.

Africa: Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Mali, Senegal and Togo

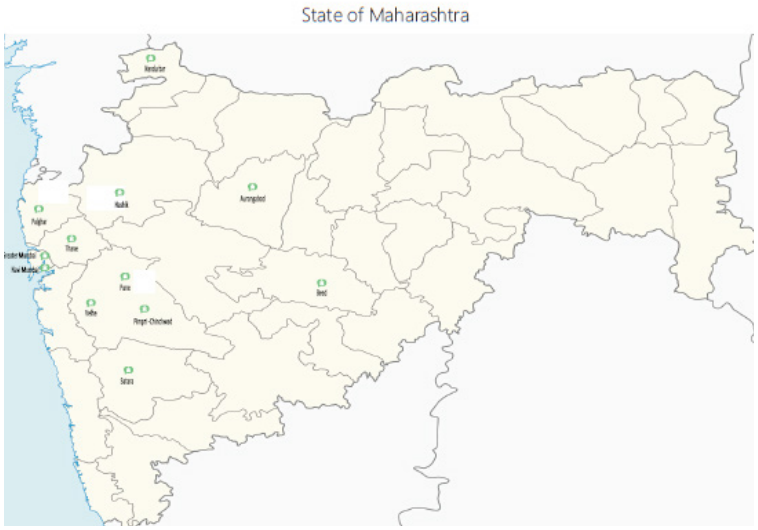
Latin America: Bolivia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Peru

Asia: Bangladesh, India, Cambodia and the Philippines

Europe: Spain

5. Geographical strategies:

RURAL AND URBAN SETTINGS



Most of our action is carried out in rural areas. However, given the increasing urbanization of the world's population during the period covered by this plan we redefine and strengthen our efforts in marginalized peri-urban areas.

6. Strategic priorities

In the context of the above situation, much remains to be done for the realization of children's rights in India and in Maharashtra where Educo is active. In the last four years Educo has begun the transition to a child rights-based approach and it is expected that this approach will be consolidated during this Strategic Plan.

The Child Rights-based Approach is understood as an approach that considers and treats children as rights holders and the government as the primary duty bearer together with care givers, parents, teachers and others in the civil society. The overall vision is that children's rights are recognized and enjoyed by children everywhere. The civil society organizations by their own mission assume the role of change agents and work together with the right holders, the duty bearers and care givers to support, to critique, to innovate and to enhance the movement towards the realization of the goals to ensure children's rights.

Within this approach, Educo has identified three sets of strategic actions that it will pursue in meeting goals outlined in this strategic plan:

1. Campaigns and advocacy to raise awareness, mobilize and influence political will and to hold duty bearers to account.
2. Empowering children to recognize and defend their rights and strengthening capacities of duty bearers to meet their obligations towards children.
3. Demonstrating effective and efficient delivery of entitlements and response to children.

DRAFTING OF COUNTRY STRATEGIC PLAN 2017-2019

The process of drafting the Country Strategic Plan (CSP) for Educo in India involved a series of consultations with representatives of Educo's present and potential partner organizations, together with the staff of Educo at the country office. The global Educo Strategic Plan 2015-2018 was used as a reference for developing the country strategic plan. A results framework for Educo's work in India was developed in two phases. In the first phase, goals and objectives were finalized and in the second phase, strategic actions required to achieve the agreed goals and objectives were discussed. Discussions included deliberation on relevance of actions, defining target groups, determining rights-based focus and drafting strategic measures towards realizing the agreed goals and objectives. A final draft based on the various consultations was presented to the senior management of Educo from the head office as well as the Asia region at the Asia Regional Conference held in Mumbai in February 2017.

Educo's strategic program goals are derived from its global mandate to adopt a child rights-based approach where we put outcomes related to children at the heart of our strategies.

During the period of this strategic plan, Educo's programs in India will be geared to ensuring outcomes in three areas: education, protection and governance. Every project we work in, we will strive to ensure core program outcomes:

- Children's learning outcomes improve,
- Children are safe and protected and;
- Children's voices are heard.

We will achieve these outcomes through a combination of the following strategic actions:

- Campaigning and advocating for adoption, adaptation and scale up of promising approaches, designing and implementation of policies, programs and legislation that promote and protect children's rights;
- Strengthening capacities of duty bearers and children and;
- Demonstrating models of innovative and effective delivery of services to children

Developmental goals:

Educo's developmental goals for India are derived from the emerging mission of the organization worldwide "to work as a catalyst within a global movement committed to the realization of child rights in pursuit of their wellbeing".

During the three years of this strategic plan period Educo will focus on transforming its presence in India, diversifying sources of funds and fostering strategic partnerships.

Goal 1: Education (INR 86,100,102)

Children and adolescents exercise and enjoy their right to an equitable, transformative and quality education throughout their lives.

Objective 1.1

Right to education: All children, without any discrimination, access school regularly through establishment of adequate infrastructure, affordability and accessibility

Indicators

Increase in the number of children and adolescents who are regularly present in the school and complete schooling

Number of schools in the project area that comply with the RTE legislation

Milestones:
2017

- Collaborating with stakeholders like the district and block level education authority– Tripartite agreements made between Educo – Partner organization and the Education department

2018

- Integration of Children's Right to education in all projects of Educo completing the shift from service approach to rights-based approach to development
- Identification of new initiative on right to education for children affected by seasonal migration
- Projects ensure all children get enrolled in school to access education especially children in difficult circumstances and disabled children

2019

- RTE Norms - Gap Assessment report on the infrastructure, faculties and services in school
- Advocacy strategy for secondary education disseminated with key stakeholders
- Educo-supported services like Child Development Centres (Balwadi centres) adoption by state government
- School development plans in every school made with the support of the SMC's
- Improvement in the functioning of at least 4 services under the RTE norms

Strategic lines of intervention

Stakeholders	Our Intervention
Rights Holders	Direct services Equipping schools with appropriate infrastructure like laboratories, teaching and learning aids, drinking water and toilets, playgrounds, and child-friendly structures. Arranging safe transportation to and from school. Establishing effective and safe models for providing good quality education for the children who are most neglected, stigmatised and those excluded because of migration Supporting early childhood centres and preschool education for children in difficult circumstances. Supporting remedial classes for children who need additional support. Supporting bridge centres to attract and prepare out-of-school children to school.
Secondary Duty Bearers	Capacity Building Developing school practices and policies to promote inclusive education Mobilising necessary conditions and resources for providing quality pre-primary and primary education to all children without discrimination Contributing to teacher's trainings and trainings for the SMC's to improve the school system.
Primary Duty Bearers	Campaigns and Advocacy Campaigning for access to equitable and quality schooling for all children under the RTE regulations Advocating for inclusion of access to quality education for children under 6 and over 14 (beyond current RTE regulations) Advocating for formal and equal education for children affected by migration in all conditions Establishing partnership with local governments in the project locations

Objective 1.2

Rights in education: Children experience improved learning outcomes through relevant, creative, student-centered and inclusive teaching-learning processes

Indicators

Increase in the number of children whose learning levels have improved significantly.

Increase in the satisfaction levels of students with the teaching-learning process.

Milestones: 2017:

- Projects designed to use a multi-pronged approach to address learning outcomes of student engagement in the classroom, school and the community

2018:

- Report on assessment of teaching pedagogies and learning assessment against education for dignity framework adopted in ongoing projects
- Improved learning outcomes ensured in Education-focused projects with integration of core programming approach

2019:

- Roadmap for implementing modules for fixing learning deficit in secondary education (for 15-18-year-olds) in Educo supported projects for 2019

Strategic lines of intervention	
Stakeholders	**Our Intervention**
Rights Holders	Direct Services Organising exposure visits and demonstrative activities on inclusive and participatory teaching Making education activity-based and one that elicits children's participation. Implementing child-centric learning process for holistic development of children. Incorporating sports, games and cultural and literary activities within the school system. Supporting supplementary education, remedial classes and supportive activities.
Secondary Duty Bearers	Capacity Building Motivating and training teachers through trainings exposures and other learning methodologies. Building capacities of school authorities, teachers and SMC to comply with their obligations to RTE Act. Best practices of ECCE and primary education methods (from current projects) are documented and are used for cross-learning and upscaling the program Designing development pathways for implementing education for dignity approach Building the capacity of the school teachers on the best practices – teaching-learning processes, creating a conducive environment and being sensitive to children
Primary Duty Bearers	Campaigns and Advocacy Providing a conducive or supportive environment in school system so that children look forward to coming to school. Adapting and contextualising education relating to the experience of the students. Striving to end corporal punishment and any form of discrimination in the schools. Collaborating with authorities, teachers and their associations, to partner with them on RTE compliance.

Objective 1.3:

Rights through education: Children participate as responsible citizens with full respect for human rights, dignity and social justice

Indicators

Number of children who practice mutual respect and collaborative approach towards each other.

Number of schools with clear child participation structures and effective contributions by children

Milestones:

2018

- Enhanced capacities of children to change behavior in the 50 communities in three districts
- All sponsorship projects linked with the education for dignity approach of Educo

2019

- A platform created for children to voice their views and opinion – through Children's groups

Strategic lines of intervention	
Stakeholders	**Our Intervention**
Rights Holders	Direct Services Including children's participation in school and facilitating children's association and groups. Incorporating children's active representation in the school management committees. Demonstrating child rights and human rights education in schools
Secondary Duty Bearers	Capacity Building Strengthening non-discriminating human rights-based orientation among students and teachers. Creating a strong link between parents and the school to facilitate parental participation
Primary Duty Bearers	Campaigns and Advocacy Promoting community participation and ownership in design and development of schools through SMC's. Advocating for including children's rights and human rights education in schools.

Goal 2: Protection (INR 23,170,291)

Children enjoy their right to live in safe and protective environments

Objective 2.1

Fostering of family and community environments for children that are free from violence, mistreatment, negligence and abuse.

Indicators

Increase and improvement in the implementation of protection standards and plans.

Effective Monitoring and review systems developed by Educo and Partners

Milestones:

2017

- Child safeguarding policy duly implemented and signed by all partners and staff of Educo.
- Partnership with the schools, local government units on understanding child-led child protection policies for schools
- Community child protection committees strengthened in local areas.

2018

- Child Protection Policies drafted and implemented in the school systems in every Educo location
- Embarking new strategic partnership with child rights experts' organizations for learning and model building

2019

- Child protection mechanisms integrated into all Educo programmes with children taking the lead in the process
- Children empowered to participate in community-level governance

Strategic lines of intervention	
Stakeholders	**Our Intervention**
Rights Holders	Empowering children by enhancing their capacities and resilience to resist violence and abuse and to defend their rights in private and public spaces, including in institutions and through mechanisms for their protection Critical reflection workshops to challenge and change existing social norms and behaviour pertaining gender and power with children and young people (male and female) Providing support services to children rescued from harmful/abusive/exploitative situations Supporting children in conflict with law through legal assistance, counselling and necessary care Reporting and responding cases of abuse and exploitation and following them up Introducing child protection standards through jointly agreed policies and practice Preventing and tracking down children who have been trafficked and children at risk of abuse/exploitation
Secondary Duty Bearers	Strengthening child protection standards, policy, and implementation mechanisms with the participation of children in schools and relevant local institutions
Primary Duty Bearers	Strengthening capacities of duty bearers in relevant local institutions and child protection systems on child protection, gender equality and child rights Collaborating with the Government Departments for rescuing and rehabilitating the exploited children with sensitivity and respect for their rights. Strengthening capacities of government agencies to prevent, protect and respond to abuse and exploitation of children

Goal 3: Governance (INR 45,00,000)

Children and adolescents practise active citizenship within the framework of public systems that promote their rights.

General Objective 3.1

States' (principal duty bearers) fulfillment of their duty to establish effective laws, policies and structures that guarantee child rights.

Indicators

Number of local governments with whom we work that develop and/or improve their rights strategies and increased resources.

Milestones:

2017

- Educo and partners have clear understanding on school governance/School Management committee

2018

- Assessment completed on functioning of School Management committees (SMC) and the nature and extent of children's participation in school governance (SMC) & local governance disseminated.
- Capacity building completed for partner organizations, on children's right to participation in school governance, SMC and local governance

2019

- Assessment report on functioning of School Management committees (SMC) and the nature and extent of children's participation in school governance (SMC) & local governance disseminated.
- Enhance children's influence in the functioning of SMCs

Strategic lines of intervention	
Stakeholders	**Our Intervention**
Rights Holders	Awareness-raising on child rights, especially right to participation. Initiating children's groups and promoting their agency in protecting their rights.
Secondary Duty Bearers	Awareness-raising on child rights, especially right to participation. Creating awareness about government responsibilities as primary duty bearers among communities Promoting child friendly communities, villages and localities through children's engagement.
Primary Duty Bearers	Advocating with the government for recognising children's right to participation and consultation with children as mandatory for local governments. Engaging with respective government organisations/departments on child participation. Documenting and disseminating instances of good practices by other governments

General Objective 3.2

Playing of an active role by citizens and civil society (secondary duty bearers) in building and monitoring public strategies to defend and promote child rights.

Indicators

Increase and improvement in civil society's initiatives and proposals to promote, protect and implement child rights.

Milestones:

2017

- All key stakeholders (parent's groups, teachers groups, women's group, youth groups, children's groups, CBOs) promote child rights in their respective forums.

2018

- Key stakeholders engage with children to protect their rights of school, family, community & society.

2019

- Stakeholders act in protecting children's rights at local levels in school, family & community.

Strategic lines of intervention	
Stakeholders	**Our Intervention**
Rights Holders	Creating awareness among on children's right to protection & participation as active agents of change.
Secondary Duty Bearers	Motivating parents and communities to support initiatives by children Creating awareness among care takers on children's right to participation. Encouraging the community to promote sports, games and cultural activities among children. Training facilitators to support children's organisations.
Primary Duty Bearers	Organising interface of children within communities and local governments.

Goal 4: Integration of Child rights -Based Approach (INR 33,46,000)

Educo adopts a Child Rights-based Approach at all levels of the organization.

Objective 4.1

Educo has enhanced capacity to implement child rights-based programs in India.

Indicators

All projects implemented by Educo (directly or through partners) have a child rights based approach

Milestones:

2018

- Code of Conduct and Child Safeguarding Policy are operational, with corresponding reporting protocols in place.
- Child-led Child Protection Policies piloted and replicated in every institution supported by Educo
- All old Educo projects undergo complete transition through a visioning process for integration of CRBA in the new project phase by June 2018
- Capacity of all partners and Educo staff built on CRBA by end of 2018 to roll out child rights-based planning
- Educo India to complete preparation for the CRSA on protection and governance by end of 2018

2019

- Policy, program and protocols for volunteers, interns and community facilitators are established.
- CRSA Protection and Governance in Maharashtra completed by end 2019
- Educo will position itself as a Child Rights organization with clear focus on ending violence against children through launch of CRSA
- Educo will consolidate its position as a Child Rights organization experienced in right to education through launch of CRSA

Goal 5: Funding- Mobilisation of resources (INR 49,34,606)

Educo achieves financial sustainability in support of its mission.

- Strengthening the organization's internal capacity through training, coaching, mentoring and improving the existing internal processes
- Streamlining annual events organized by Educo/partners on education & protection
- Conducting participatory visioning exercises for partners to develop understanding and buy in for CRBA

Educo's operations in India are fully dependent on resources generated by the head office through its private individual and institutional donors. During the period of this strategic plan, Educo will grow and diversify sources of funding within and outside of India. The processes for the same will be initiated in 2019.

Strategies

Strengthening our sponsorship systems by developing sponsor accountability strategy

Mapping of local sponsorship models and feasibility analysis for Educo to be completed

Membership in international networks as part of global Educo.

Participating in calls for application/proposal.

Participating in consortium applications.

Accessing fundraising capacity building opportunities.

Alliances with strategic NGOs.

Objective 5.1

Educo has increased funding from diverse sources within and outside of India

Indicators

Number of grants leveraged through external Indian and overseas sources.

Milestones:

2017

- Participated in calls for EU grant for new project proposal CORO.

2018

- Participated in call for Proposal for Barcelona council grant for ongoing partnership
- Educo registered in India as an independent Indian entity

2019

- Diversified portfolio of India Program including external institutional grants apart from Educo grants

GOAL 6: Visibility and Networking (INR 12,37,225)

Educo is recognized as a leader in the Child Rights sector, locally, nationally and internationally.

- Educo establishes partnerships that build a culture of promoting and protecting children's rights.
- Educo implements projects in partnership with local NGOs who have experience and expertise in delivering results for children. During the period of this strategic plan, Educo will strengthen its strategic partnerships with NGOs, networks, campaigns and academic institutions, catalyzing movements for the realization of children's rights in India. Educo will also strengthen partnership with local, state and national governments.

Strategies

Strengthening partnerships with strategic alliances, networks and coalitions.

Actively participating in relevant conferences, forums, trainings and seminars.

Mainstreaming Educo's advocacy in networks.

Conducting research and studies.

Creating and distributing publication of best practices and evidence-based learning

Objective 6.1

Educo co-creates interventions with strategic partners that effectively and efficiently enhance results for children

Indicators

Interventions co-created with strategic partners on thematic interventions in Maharashtra.

Milestones:

2018

- Established rapport with State Commission for Protection of Child Rights by end of 2018

2019

- New strategic partnerships developed for co-creating- (i) for secondary education & (ii) for seasonal migration in Maharashtra

7. Processes (how the internal policies will be implemented in line with the institutional principles)

Integration of the principles (participation, non-discrimination, transparency, dynamic-innovative initiatives) in program/project management and partnering process:

Participation: Making sure that the children, families and communities we work with have meaningful participation in every aspect of what we do: baseline data collection, prioritizing of project activities, planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and learning. In working with children, we will ensure that our Child Participation Standards are applied in all activities. These will be promoted among stakeholders, including children, strategic networks, council and committees we work with. At the organizational level, we will strengthen the current practice of participatory culture in which staff members at all levels collaborate through consultations and team discussions.

Non-discrimination: Inspired by our principles, we will start focusing more on the most vulnerable and marginalized children in the areas where we work. The new geographical areas to be explored within this Country Plan period will be based on reaching the most marginalized and disadvantaged children. At the organizational level, we will work to adopt policies on inclusion and non-discrimination in staff recruitment, development, internal mobility and other processes.

Transparency: Full operationalization of the accountability mechanism for Complaints and Feedback Policy. Strengthening the current practice of providing accomplishment reports, project presentations to adults and primary duty bearers (state bodies) by providing the same information to children through developing child-friendly IEC materials and reports. We will also explicitly apply our position of zero tolerance on corruption to all contracts.

Dynamic Spirit: We will strive to develop our capacity to effectively work with diversity and to anticipate as well as create trends. Working with strategic alliances and partners is essential for building a just society and for expanding our reach. We will strengthen collaboration with ChildFund and INGO Charter and build partnership both at the local and national level based on commitment, equity and respect, to create effective partnerships that may have a long-lasting impact on children's wellbeing.

Alliances and partnerships:

- Right to Education Forum (Maharashtra and National. This is a network of civil society organisations with a federal structure from states to national level).
- Mumbai Working Group on Child Protection (This is group of NGOs based in Mumbai and working on child protection issues in the city and state and often making representations at national level or with consequences at state and national level)
- Donor network in Maharashtra (network of international grant-making organisations that have an office in Maharashtra, such as Action Aid, Swiss Aid, Terre des hommes (Germany), World Vision, Save the Children, Plan, etc)

Except for the donor network all other networks are recognized by the authorities, make frequent representations to authorities and are often invited to comment on policies/guidelines or for consultations by the authorities.

Other internal processes:

- Registration of the new entity of Educo will be a key focus for 2018. The registration is expected to be completed by end of 2018
- Aligning of job descriptions based on the Birches framework to be completed by end of 2018
- Mapping of local sponsorship models and feasibility analysis for Educo to launch mobilization of resources through local sponsors
- Implementation of Child Safeguarding Policy for Educo and Partners in true letter and spirit

8. Resource allocation and organizational implications

Funding resource allocation

Year (FY)	In Euros							
	Resources from HO	Spanish Grants		International Grants		Local Grants		Total
		Public	Private	Public	Private	Public	Private	
2017	2013376	0	0	0	0	0	0	2013376
2018	1430971	0	0	0	0	0	0	1430971
2019	2121948	0	0	0	375000	0	13605	2510553
Total	5566294	0	0	0	375000	0	13605	5954900

Educo India funding resources for 2016-2019 will be invested to achieve the six Strategic Goals. 84% of the budget will be allocated to the three strategic development goals and three organizational goals and 16% will be allocated to administrative operational cost.

Goal (Year)	Deployment (Year)		
	2017	2018	2019
Goal 1	9,12,06,478	8,61,00,102	
Goal 2	49,35,561	2,31,70,291	
Goal 3	0	45,00,000	
Goal 4	0	33,46,000	
Goal 5	4,01,600	0	
Goal 6	0	12,37,225	
Sponsorship	56,52,000	49,34,606	
Institutional strengthening, Institutional communication, Programmes on child rights	52,55,745		
Monitoring, evaluation, learning & impact	39,25,200		
Administration			
Total			

Human Resources and organizational implications

To effectively deliver on our commitment to improving children's wellbeing, the following changes in the organization structure are needed within the strategic period:

- Streamlining of positions within the organization and adoption of area-based approach in programming towards a more comprehensive and holistic implementation of the projects within a specific geographical area of coverage.
- Hiring of additional staff: One additional staff member with considerable experience in the specific specialization of MEL will be needed in the Country Office, considering the growing importance to impact assessment and communication. This staff member will facilitate the formulation of a MEL strategy, and plan and deploy it in Educo and Partner organizations.
- Clear job descriptions with roles and responsibilities specially to synchronize the domain expertise role and project monitoring and evaluation roles for the Program team.

9. Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning

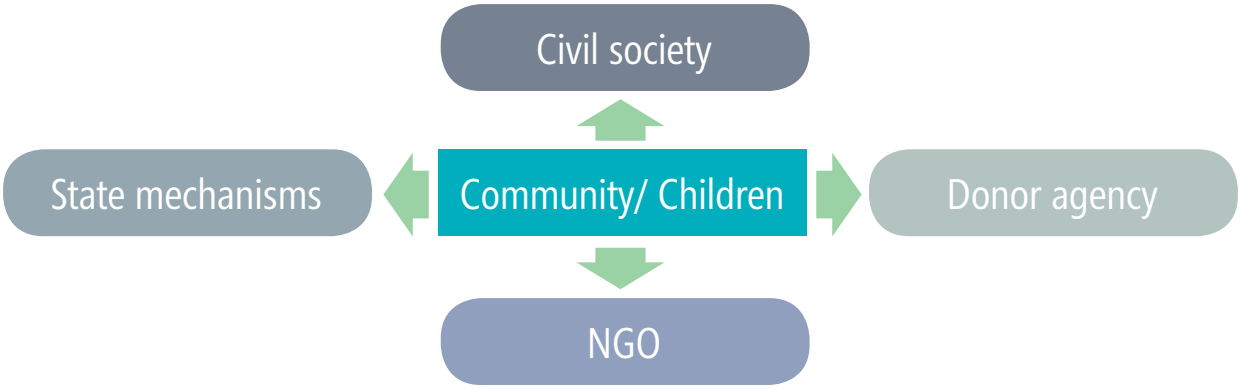
Monitoring, responding to and demonstrating tangible results are central to accountability at all levels. Educo will ensure accountability to all stakeholders—children and their communities, partners and donors (institutional and individual)—through the evaluation of processes and results and evidence-based decision making.

To adopt a rights-based and results-oriented working culture, Educo India will strengthen its Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) processes and resources during this strategic period. This shall be catalyzed by the establishment of a MEL system that should contribute to the continuous improvement of programming and implementation, and to transparency, accountability and visibility.

At the organizational level, the MEL system will ensure that policies, systems, standards and protocols are aligned with our goals, values and principles. However, these should be dynamic enough to adapt easily to changing times. The system will also ensure that core competencies acquired by the organization stay within the organization. This entails well-planned capacity building of staff and a centralized information system to store evidence or information that is easy to manage, retrieve and share.

What we propose as our MEL framework:

The rights-based approach is based on the basic premise that community is the primary stakeholder with full rights over their own development and not partial as has been the trend in the development sector. To ensure full rights with complete control over not only the results but also the process, the primary stakeholder or people must be not only at the centre of the project design to implementation and results but should take decisions and guide their own path based on informed choices.

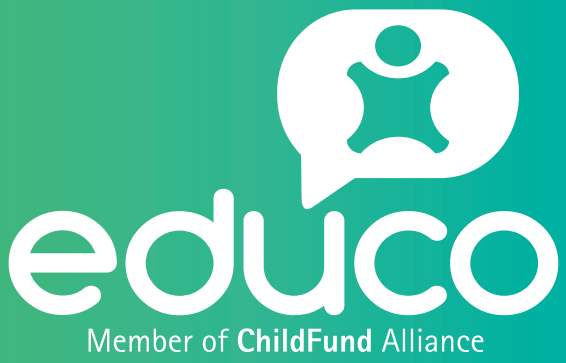


The picture above depicts how the process should flow from the primary stakeholder/ children to the other stakeholders for their development. This approach is a shift from the top down to a bottom up approach where dialogue will be the tool for programming and will ensure equal participation and control of the primary stakeholder over the programme from the initial phase through to the results.

Accountability model- PME Tools:

- Identification of Partner- RBA
- Participatory programme design- mapping- reaching out to the fringes; participatory tools; RBM
- Implementation – an empowering process for all
- People-centric monitoring and evaluation- community empowering processes, RBM system
- Transparency-based financial monitoring

STRUCTURE OF THE MEL SYSTEM: PROCESSES



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