



WHAT WE DO:

- School Setup
- School Self Review & Evaluation
- School Improvement
- Leadership & Management Consultancy



Your Child's School: An Investment for Life?

Kavita Anand, Adhyayan's Executive Director, and Nitin Padte, Head of Secondary, Ecole Mondiale World School, held a seminar with this title to over 400 members of the Kutch Corporate Forum (KCF) on 21st July 2012. KCF is an organisation that aims to 'support the spirit of enterprise and entrepreneurship'. Usually their seminars are business-oriented but they requested an insight into choosing a school after discovering it wasn't all child's play.

The seminar began by exploring why the choice of a school is an important one, as 25% of an average lifespan is spent in gaining an education, most of it in school. If the child experiences herself as a valued student, it contributes to her happiness and life chances. The parent experiences the satisfaction of having done a good job. Kavita and Nitin then attempted to tease out the most important criteria on which to base one's choice - practical elements such as cost, timings and distance to the values and 'brand' of the school - before settling on the topic that was causing so much controversy: examination boards.

Expounding the realities of school numbers and costs illustrated that having one's heart set doesn't guarantee successful admission. For example, there are only 96 schools following the International Baccalaureate all over India. Having explored what makes the boards different, Kavita emphasised the variability within schools affiliated to the same board. Since no prescriptive quality standard is described and inspected by a Board, the education a child receives depends very much on the exposure and interpretation of the school's educators to the vision of the board.

At this point, Adhyayan set about training the seminar delegates to become amateur school inspectors, giving them the questions and skills to assess a school for themselves, and mobilising them as parents on the mission towards quality schooling!

A break for dinner allowed the delegates to refuel and mull over what they had listened to. Much lively discussion on the merits of the various boards ensued, with delegates trying to convince each other one way or another. After dinner, the first 150 delegates who had signed up, were able to attend the workshop which took them through typical IGCSE and IB lessons.

An IGCSE English language listen-

ing exercise gave the delegates an insight into the range of skills that the IGCSE tests compared to the traditional language learning approach of rote-learning vocabulary lists and grammar rules. The delegates responded enthusiastically to the new territory, commenting on the practical value of the exercise, developing mathematics and reasoning skills as well as new vocabulary.

The session then moved on to the International Baccalaureate geography lesson on 'migration', starting with a brainstorm of what the delegates knew about migration. As a migrant community themselves, this was something they related to, and the range of personal experience was astonishing. The delegates then discussed an article from The Economist on remittances, responding with interest to the graphics illustrating remittance journeys and the migrant relationships which they entailed. There were several comments along the lines of 'This is what we'd do at work!'

An insight into a lifetime investment and developing new skills in the mix: satisfied patrons, we think!



Policy Implementation focus at the Bihar Conference

*By Spokey Wheeler,
International Director,
Adhyayan*

This June, I attended a three-day International Conference on Information Technology (IT) in Teacher Education in India, hosted by the World Bank and the European Commission, in collaboration with the Department of Teacher Education, and the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India. The Inaugural Address was delivered by the Hon. Chief Minister of Bihar, Mr Nitish Kumar, who was eloquent in stressing Bihar's urgent need to exploit new technologies to help achieve its challenging targets for teacher recruitment and in-service training.

The backdrop to this conference is the scale of teacher vacancies in India, and the number of untrained teachers teaching within the system. The statistics are startling. There are currently 523,000 school teacher vacancies at the elementary level. However, the norms for pupil-teacher ratio as specified in the Schedule under the Right to Education Act and the provisions of pupil-teacher ratio specified in the RTE Schedule expands that requirement by a further 510,000 teachers. In addition, almost 775,000 teachers do not possess the prescribed pre-service qualifications.

The focus was firmly fixed on how innovative strategies applying information technology could provide scaled solutions

to teacher education. Expert practitioners from within India and across the world came together with representatives from state governments including Bihar to address the problems faced. This was a conference of real debate on how to turn policy ideas into effective implementation.

Amongst the international guests was a delegation from the Open University UK, showcasing their award-winning 'English in Action' project in Bangladesh, and sharing the potential of their teacher education proposal for India.

This was one of those rare conferences which, even now a month after it took place, makes me believe that by working together real progress is possible.



"There are currently 523,000 school teacher vacancies at the elementary level."



Lily

The Adhyayan team bid farewell to Lily Sommer, our UK intern, with a reminiscence filled dinner hosted to celebrate her work with us and her birthday in the last week of June. Lily who studied Economics at the University of Cambridge, was with us from January to June 2012. Her job profile was to assist Kavita and Spokey on Adhyayan's projects in Leadership and Management, School review and School set-up. These took her to Bangladesh, Kolkata, Ranpur and Dahanu, a rather eclectic exposure to rural and urban India!

Responding to the needs of the organization, Lily also undertook some onerous tasks during her time with us. She drafted the business plan for Adhyayan, assisted the leaders of our school in Ranpur, Gujarat to undertake their School

Self Review and Evaluation (SSRE), oversaw the website change, recruited, contracted, sorted the documentation, and did all the minutes for our meetings. Needless to say we want her back as soon as possible.

Our interns have always exceeded our expectations and Lily successfully passed the baton to Victoria Clayton (known to us as 'Vicky'), our promising new intern from the UK. She is an undergraduate in Human Sciences from New College, University of Oxford. She has earlier interned with our advisory body, the National Education Trust, in the UK. Within a week of being with us, Vicky has been an integral part of a visioning exercise that gave her a feel of the organization's anticipated growth trajectory and core values. She has worked further on

finalising the business plan and helped run a session on education by Adhyayan in the summer programme of the Mahindra United World College, Pune. It has taken her no time at all, to get into the racy pace at which Adhyayan works.

Vicky is with us till the end of August. We welcome her on board!



Vicky