

## Apnalaya

Let's delve into the transformative work of Apnalaya, an organization dedicated to uplifting urban poor communities in Mumbai through holistic development initiatives. With a rich history of service spanning decades, Apnalaya has become synonymous with empowerment and social change. Through a combination of community engagement, advocacy, and capacity-building efforts, Apnalaya is paving the way for a more equitable and inclusive society.

## Rupantar

In this feature, we turn our attention to Rupantar, a dynamic organization committed to catalyzing societal change by revolutionizing education in India's rural landscape. With a legacy spanning several years, Rupantar has emerged as a beacon of hope, impacting the lives of countless individuals across the nation. Through innovative educational initiatives, Rupantar seeks to empower rural communities, equipping them with the tools and knowledge necessary to thrive in the modern world. By leveraging technology, community engagement, and capacity-building programs, Rupantar is reshaping the educational paradigm, one student at a time.

Learn more about these stories on page number 2 & 4.

## Education in Rural Goa: A Model for the Nation

In recent years, Goa has implemented significant changes in its rural education system, setting an example for other states. Under the leadership of Chief Minister Pramod Sawant, these initiatives aim to enhance educational quality and bridge the urban-rural divide through community involvement and capacity building.

Goa's reforms emphasize quality improvement and teacher training. The government has introduced programs aligned with modern teaching techniques and the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. Key initiatives include vocational training, computer education, and skill development, which equip students with practical knowledge and employability skills. Competency-based learning and project-based assessments foster critical thinking and problem-solving abilities among students.

### Empowering Through Education

Education in rural Goa is seen as a tool for empowerment. The state focuses on inclusive education, aiming to uplift underprivileged communities. Initiatives like mid-day meal schemes, scholarships, and free textbooks make education accessible, reducing dropout rates among girls and marginalized groups. Teacher training programs ensure educators are equipped with contemporary skills, maintaining high educational standards.

### Digital Initiatives

Digitalization has been key to Goa's reforms. The government has introduced digital tools and platforms to enhance learning, providing students with additional materials and interactive content. These initiatives have proven especially beneficial during the COVID-19 pandemic, ensuring uninterrupted learning.

### A Model for Other States

Goa's approach to rural education offers valuable lessons for other states. Its comprehensive strategy of quality improvement, community involvement, capacity building, and digitalization can be replicated to achieve similar successes. By adopting these best practices, states can address educational disparities and promote inclusive growth.

Goa's rural education reforms set a benchmark for the nation. The state's commitment to improving educational standards, coupled with strong community and volunteer support, showcases a sustainable model for empowering rural communities through education. As other states replicate this success, the future of India's education landscape looks promising, focusing on quality, inclusivity, and community-driven development.

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If you are passionate about making an impact in the education sector, we encourage you to join JEET today and become a member of the movement to transform education in India. As a member, you will have the opportunity to work with a network of NGOs, governments, organizations, institutions, and individuals who are deeply committed to promoting quality education for all.

To become a member of JEET, simply scan the QR Code below.

Join us today and let's work together to eliminate educational inequality and promote quality education for all.



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## Apnalaya's Holistic Approach to Uplifting the Urban Poor

In the heart of Mumbai, where the stark contrasts of urban prosperity and poverty coexist, Apnalaya shines as a transformative force dedicated to uplifting the urban poor. Established with the mission to enable access to basic services, healthcare, education, and livelihoods, Apnalaya's holistic and community-driven approach has been instrumental in addressing the multifaceted challenges faced by marginalized communities.

### **Fostering Educational Opportunities**

Education is a cornerstone of Apnalaya's initiatives. Recognizing that education is pivotal for breaking the cycle of poverty, Apnalaya's programs are designed to ensure that children from underprivileged backgrounds have access to quality education. This focus is vital because education not only equips individuals with knowledge and skills but also empowers them to pursue better opportunities and improve their quality of life.

In the academic year 2022-23, Apnalaya made significant strides in enhancing educational access and quality. The organization supported numerous children in their educational journey by providing school supplies, scholarships, and supplementary tutoring. By doing so, Apnalaya helped bridge the gap between students from impoverished families and their more affluent peers, ensuring that financial constraints do not hinder educational attainment.

### **Capacity Building: A Pathway to Empowerment**

One of Apnalaya's key strategies is capacity building, which involves empowering individuals and communities with the skills and knowledge necessary to effect change. This approach extends to both children and their parents, creating an environment where education is valued and supported at all levels.

For parents, Apnalaya conducts workshops and training sessions that emphasize the importance of education and equip them with the tools to support their children's learning. These sessions cover various topics, including effective parenting practices, health and hygiene, and financial literacy. By educating parents, Apnalaya ensures that children receive the necessary support at home to complement their school education.

For teachers and school administrators, Apnalaya offers professional development programs that enhance their teaching skills and pedagogical practices. These programs focus on innovative teaching methods, classroom management, and inclusive education strategies. By building the capacity of educators, Apnalaya ensures that the quality of education provided to students is continuously improving.

### **The Backbone of Apnalaya: Volunteers**

Volunteers have become the backbone of Apnalaya's programs, playing a critical role in the successful implementation and outreach of the organization's initiatives. These dedicated individuals bring diverse skills and perspectives, which enhance the effectiveness and reach of Apnalaya's programs. Volunteers engage in various activities, from conducting surveys and data collection to mentoring students and facilitating workshops. Their commitment and passion for social change amplify the impact of Apnalaya's work. Encouraging volunteerism is vital for the sustainability and growth of such programs. Volunteers not only contribute their time and skills but also act as ambassadors for the cause, spreading awareness and inspiring others to get involved.

Apnalaya's approach to volunteerism fosters a sense of community and collective responsibility, creating a powerful network of support for the urban poor.

### **A Different Approach to Empowerment**

Apnalaya's emphasis on volunteerism and community involvement represents a distinct approach to empowerment. Rather than relying solely on external aid, Apnalaya leverages the strengths and capacities within the community. This approach not only builds resilience but also fosters a sense of ownership and agency among the beneficiaries. By involving community members in the planning and implementation of programs, Apnalaya ensures that the solutions are contextually relevant and sustainable.

### **Community Engagement and Advocacy**

Apnalaya's impact is amplified through its robust community engagement and advocacy efforts. By establishing Civic Action Groups and training community volunteers, Apnalaya mobilizes local residents to take an active role in addressing issues that affect their communities. These groups work on various fronts, from improving local infrastructure to advocating for better educational facilities and services. Moreover, Apnalaya collaborates with government agencies and other stakeholders to advocate for policies that benefit the urban poor. This includes lobbying for better school facilities, access to clean water and sanitation, and healthcare services. Through these efforts, Apnalaya ensures that the voices of marginalized communities are heard and that their needs are addressed at a systemic level.

### **Statistics and Impact**

- The impact of Apnalaya's work is evident in the statistics from the past year:
- 60.3% of women supported by Apnalaya joined the workforce for the first time.
- 32% of beneficiaries with disabilities received their disability certificates.
- Over 2,000 children benefited from educational support programs, including school supplies and scholarships.
- Numerous training sessions conducted for parents, teachers, and community members, fostering a culture of education and empowerment.

### **A Vision for the Future**

As Apnalaya continues its mission, the focus on education remains central to its vision for a better future. By fostering educational opportunities, building capacity, and advocating for systemic change, Apnalaya is transforming the lives of Mumbai's urban poor. The organization's holistic approach not only addresses immediate needs but also lays the foundation for sustainable development and long-term empowerment.

Apnalaya's dedication to creating an inclusive and equitable society where everyone has the opportunity to succeed is a testament to its commitment to social justice and human dignity. As urbanization continues to shape the future of cities like Mumbai, the work of Apnalaya becomes increasingly crucial in ensuring that the benefits of development reach all segments of society, particularly the most vulnerable.

Apnalaya's efforts in education and community empowerment are not just changing individual lives but are also contributing to the broader goal of societal transformation. By focusing on education, capacity building, and community engagement, Apnalaya exemplifies the power of holistic and inclusive approaches to addressing urban poverty and promoting sustainable development.







## Empowering India's Marginalized Youth: Rupantar's Revolutionary Influence on Education

In the expansive landscape of educational reform in India, Rupantar stands out as a beacon of innovation and dedication. Under the auspices of the Arishwinder Society, this transformative initiative collaborates with 32 states and union territories to enhance the educational experience in government schools. Rooted in the ethos of corporate social responsibility, Rupantar operates selflessly, driven by a mission to uplift the underprivileged without any commercial interests. This commitment to social good underscores the organization's belief that quality education is a fundamental right for all children, regardless of their socio-economic status. By focusing on government schools, where resources are often scarce, Rupantar ensures that the benefits of its programs reach those who need them the most.

### Zero Investment Innovation in Education

One of Rupantar's pioneering efforts is the Zero Investment Innovation for Education Initiatives (ZII EI), launched in 2014. This groundbreaking program focuses on documenting and promoting grassroots-level innovations by teachers across the country. The initiative celebrates zero-cost ideas that revolutionize teaching practices, making a significant impact on education. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, Rupantar recognized over 2,000 teachers for their visionary contributions, highlighting the profound potential of creative, cost-effective educational strategies. These innovations range from simple yet effective classroom management techniques to novel methods of engaging students in subjects like mathematics and science without requiring additional financial resources. By spotlighting these ideas, Rupantar not only honors the ingenuity of teachers but also provides a platform for these practices to be replicated and scaled across the nation, thereby improving the quality of education on a large scale.

### Aligning with National Education Policy

As the educational landscape in India evolved, Rupantar adeptly adapted its programs to meet the changing needs of the sector. Embracing the principles of India's National Education Policy 2020, Rupantar focused on competency-based learning frameworks and project-based assessments. Collaborations with entities like the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) led to the development of a competency learning framework, now prominently featured on the CBSE website. This achievement marks a significant milestone in Rupantar's journey, underscoring its role in shaping modern educational practices. The alignment with NEP 2020 reflects Rupantar's commitment to not only keeping pace with national educational standards but also driving them forward. This alignment ensures that the programs designed and implemented by Rupantar are in sync with the latest educational reforms, promoting critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills among students.

### Embracing Digitalization

Digitalization has become a cornerstone of Rupantar's initiatives. The introduction of Auro Scholar, an app-based platform, exemplifies this shift. Auro Scholar offers monthly quizzes aligned with the curriculum, providing students with an innovative way to engage with their studies. These quizzes not only serve as educational tools but also offer micro-scholarships based on student performance, incentivizing learning and rewarding achievement.



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The app's user-friendly interface and engaging content make learning accessible and enjoyable, particularly for students in remote areas who may lack traditional educational resources.

Additionally, Rupantar's Project Inclusion program has been instrumental in sensitizing teachers to the needs of diverse learners. Initially conducted in traditional formats, this program transitioned to a digital platform, expanding its reach and equipping teachers with the tools necessary to support all students effectively. This digital shift ensures that inclusive education is accessible and scalable, reaching more educators and students across the nation.

### ***Impact and Future Directions***

Rupantar's efforts have had a profound impact on the educational landscape in India. By fostering a culture of innovation, collaboration, and digital literacy, Rupantar is transforming the way education is delivered and received. Key statistics highlight this impact:

***2,000+ teachers recognized for their innovative contributions through the ZIIET program.***

***Competency learning frameworks developed in partnership with CBSE, now integrated into national education standards.***

***Auro Scholar app providing monthly quizzes and micro-scholarships, incentivizing student engagement and achievement.***

***Project Inclusion reaching a wider audience through digital platforms, promoting inclusive education practices.***

Rupantar's journey exemplifies a holistic approach to educational reform. By focusing on zero investment ideas, competency-based learning, and inclusive practices, Rupantar is not only addressing current educational challenges but also paving the way for a brighter future. The organization's selfless dedication to uplifting underprivileged students and empowering teachers is a testament to its vision of a more equitable and effective education system in India.

Rupantar's impact goes beyond numbers and statistics. It lies in the stories of students who, for the first time, feel excited about learning, and teachers who are empowered to bring about change in their classrooms with minimal resources. The initiative's emphasis on zero investment innovations has shown that profound educational improvements do not always require significant financial input, but rather, a commitment to creativity, resourcefulness, and community engagement. As Rupantar continues to innovate and expand its reach, it remains a vital force in the transformation



## 2.5Mn

Teachers Physically Trained  
Pan India

## 300K

Government school teachers  
adopted zero-investment  
innovations.

## 32

States / UTs  
Operational in

## 28K

Teachers have completed LMS  
Course under Project  
Inclusion

## 5.2Mn +

Quizzes taken on Auroscholar  
App

## Member organizations of JEET

## Vipla Foundation

[www.viplafoundation.org](http://www.viplafoundation.org)

**Activities :** Education Initiatives, Skill Development Programs, Community Development

**VKRCE Trust**

YouTube@MathsMadeSweet

**Activites :** Education, Digital Video Library, Training.

## Ramakrishna Sarada Samiti

[www.rkssngo.org](http://www.rkssngo.org)

**Activities :** Education, Women's Empowerment and Health Camps

## National Association for the Blind

[www.nabindia.org.in](http://www.nabindia.org.in)

**Activities :** Prevention of blindness and low vision, Education, Talking books, Braille press, Vocational training, etc.

## Bombay Community Public Trust

[www.bcpt.org.in](http://www.bcpt.org.in)

**Activities :** Educational scholarships, medical relief, development of some training manuals and films, conducting NGO development activities and projects through NGOs

## Shree Samarth Vyayam Mandir

<https://ssymdadar.com/>

**Activities :** Sports Training & Certification and Yoga

**MSP Foundation**

<http://www.msp-edu.org/>

**Activities :** Educating, uplifting and strengthening through schools including the villages of Ambavade and Gursale, in Central Maharashtra.

**Muktangan Education Trust**

<https://muktanganedu.org/>

**Activities :** Seven Mumbai Municipal schools Integrated with a Teacher Education Center, Outreach through Collaborative Learning, Research and Advocacy

## The Importance of Language Proficiency: Insights from ASER 2023

The recently released ASER 2023 'Beyond Basics' survey has shed light on the pressing educational challenges faced by rural youth in India. Conducted across 28 districts in 26 states, the survey reveals that 42% of 14-18-year-olds in rural India struggle to read simple English sentences. This finding underscores the critical need for improved language education, both in English and regional languages, to equip the next generation with essential skills for their futures.

## English as an International Language

English, often regarded as the lingua franca of the modern world, plays a pivotal role in global communication, business, and education. Proficiency in English opens doors to vast opportunities, from higher education and professional advancement to accessing global information and technology. The ASER 2023 report highlights a concerning gap: less than half of rural youth can read easy English sentences, and of those who can, only 73.5% understand their meanings. This deficit limits their ability to engage with the broader world and hinders their competitiveness in a globalized economy.

## The Value of Regional Languages

While English is crucial, the importance of proficiency in regional languages cannot be overstated. According to the ASER 2023 findings, 25% of youths cannot fluently read a class 2 level text in their regional languages. Reading and writing in one's native language are foundational skills that enhance cognitive development, cultural identity, and effective communication within the community. Mastery of regional languages also supports better learning of other subjects and strengthens overall educational outcomes.

## Literacy Beyond the Classroom

The ASER report also indicates significant challenges in numeracy and functional literacy. More than half of the surveyed youths struggle with basic arithmetic, such as division problems expected to be mastered by class 3 or 4. Additionally, practical tasks like calculating hours slept or measuring objects accurately elude many students. These gaps in foundational literacy and numeracy impact their everyday lives and ability to manage basic financial tasks, underscoring the need for comprehensive educational support.

### Critical Questions and Comprehensive Analysis

Given these findings, several critical questions arise:

## Are the 42% of youth who struggle with English also facing similar challenges in their regional languages?

## Do they possess the necessary reading and writing skills to navigate daily life effectively?

Addressing these questions requires a holistic approach to data analysis, ensuring that interventions target the root causes of educational deficiencies.



## JEET's Mission

There are about 200M disadvantaged students from non-English backgrounds from 5,00,000 government and other low-fee private schools. We pledge to empower them.

JEET is developing an app/ website to give free access to a targeted 2,00,000 lessons and videos up to class 12, in 22 Indian languages.

We aim to build an all-India alliance of 1,00,000 NGOs working in the fields of Education, Sports, and Vocational training. In unity lies strength, indeed.

We facilitate periodic meetings among members. We highlight the achievements of members through social media and our own monthly newsletter - JEET KI AOR.

**GOALS: Outreach, Collaboration, Resource collection, & Empowerment**

**Touch 200 Million**  
Disadvantaged school children

**Cover 5,00,000**  
Schools & Teachers

**Compile 2,00,000**  
Education videos and lessons

**Enroll 1,00,000**  
National NGOs

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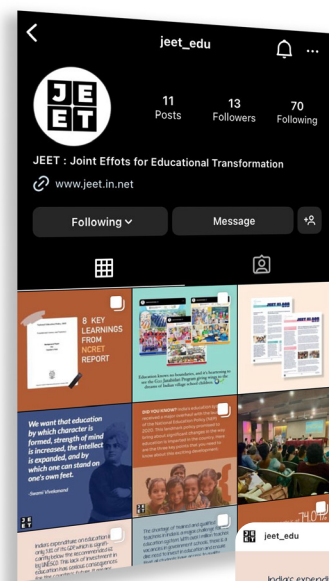
Ramakrishna Sarada Samiti - JEET,  
Sion, Mumbai, Maharashtra 400022

## Suggestions for the Way Forward

To address these challenges and improve educational outcomes, the following steps are suggested:

- 1. Strengthening Foundational Literacy and Numeracy:** Implement targeted programs to reinforce basic reading, writing, and arithmetic skills from an early age, ensuring that all students achieve proficiency by class 3.
- 2. Bilingual Education Models:** Promote bilingual education that integrates English learning with strong regional language instruction, fostering better cognitive development and language skills.
- 3. Teacher Training and Resources:** Invest in comprehensive teacher training programs and provide resources that enable educators to effectively teach both English and regional languages.
- 4. Community Engagement:** Involve parents and local communities in educational initiatives to create a supportive environment for learning and reinforce the value of education.
- 5. Use of Technology:** Leverage digital tools and platforms to provide supplementary learning materials and interactive educational content, making learning more engaging and accessible.
- 6. Policy Implementation and Monitoring:** Ensure the effective implementation of policies like the National Education Policy 2020, with regular monitoring and assessment to track progress and address gaps.

The ASER 2023 report serves as a wake-up call to the critical need for a comprehensive, inclusive, and sustained effort to improve literacy and numeracy among rural youth in India. By addressing these educational challenges head-on, we can pave the way for a more knowledgeable, skilled, and empowered generation.



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