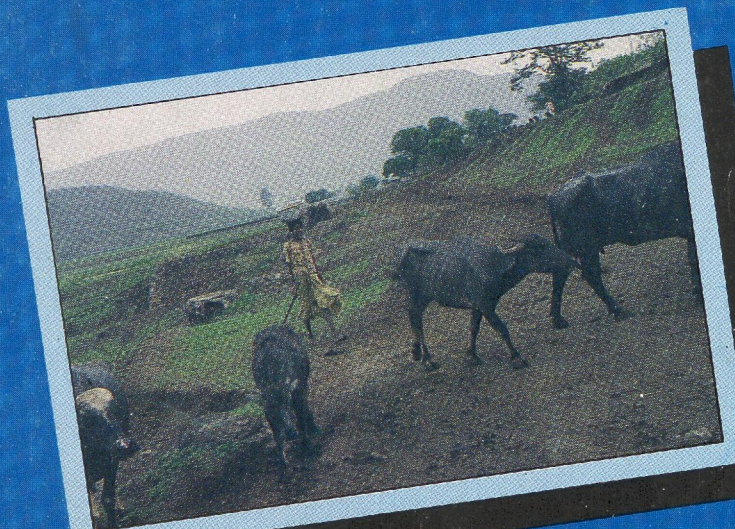


# THE PROPEL PROJECT

Action Research  
For  
Universalization of  
Primary Education



INDIAN INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION  
PUNE 411029 (INDIA) 1993



# PROPEL



## What is PROPEL Project?

### Meaning and Focus

The PROPEL project aims at universalization of primary and elementary education, within the framework of the broader objective of 'education for all'. The acronym PROPEL is derived from the initial letters of the project-title "Promoting Primary and Elementary Education". The word PROPEL betokens a vigorous onward movement of the people for reaching the goal of education for all. Microplanning by the rural communities is visualised as the major



Village Council

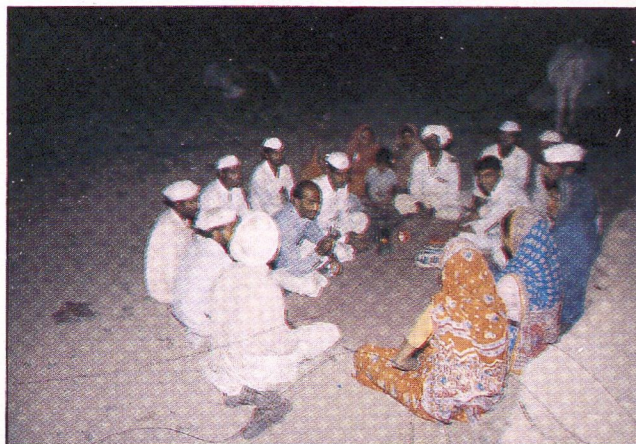
# "Promoting Primary and Elementary Education"

means for achieving a self-sustaining process of permanent education managed by the communities themselves.

## Perceptions and Approaches

The project perceives social and educational change as an integrated process in which the latent human energy necessary for propelling change and development is released through mutual understanding and collaboration between the government and the people. The project also affirms that, essentially, it is the people who are the makers of development while the government and other agencies are stimulators and facilitators. From this standpoint, the PROPEL project emphasizes a threefold approach towards community mobilization: (a) increasing the community's access to necessary information, (b) building up its planning and action skills through participatory problem-solving and (c) taking care to see that inhibitory paternalism, whether exercised by government or any other agency, does not interfere with community decisions.

The PROPEL project constitutes the third phase of an action-research project for universalization of primary education undertaken by the Indian Institute of Education, Pune, Maharashtra State, in 1979 which was the International Year of the Child.

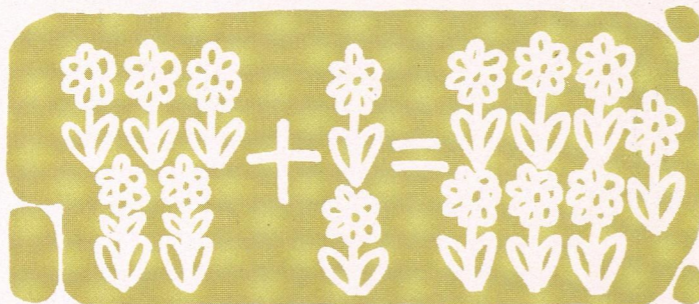


A Meeting of the Village Education Committee



Baby Sitting

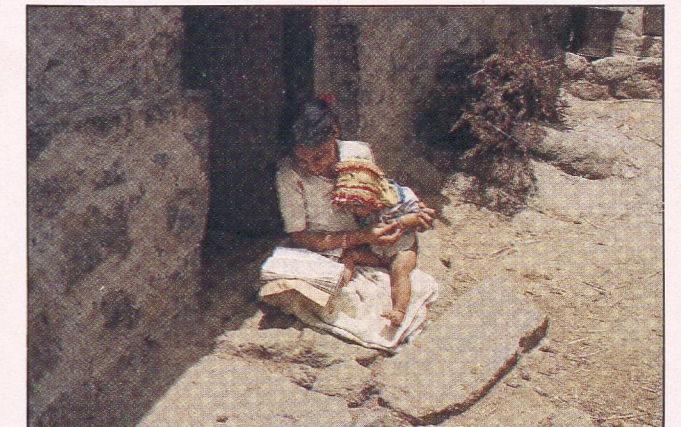
The first two phases, covering 145 villages in different types of agro-climatic areas, concentrated on non-formal primary education. PROPEL, which began in 1988, covers a much wider educational canvas.



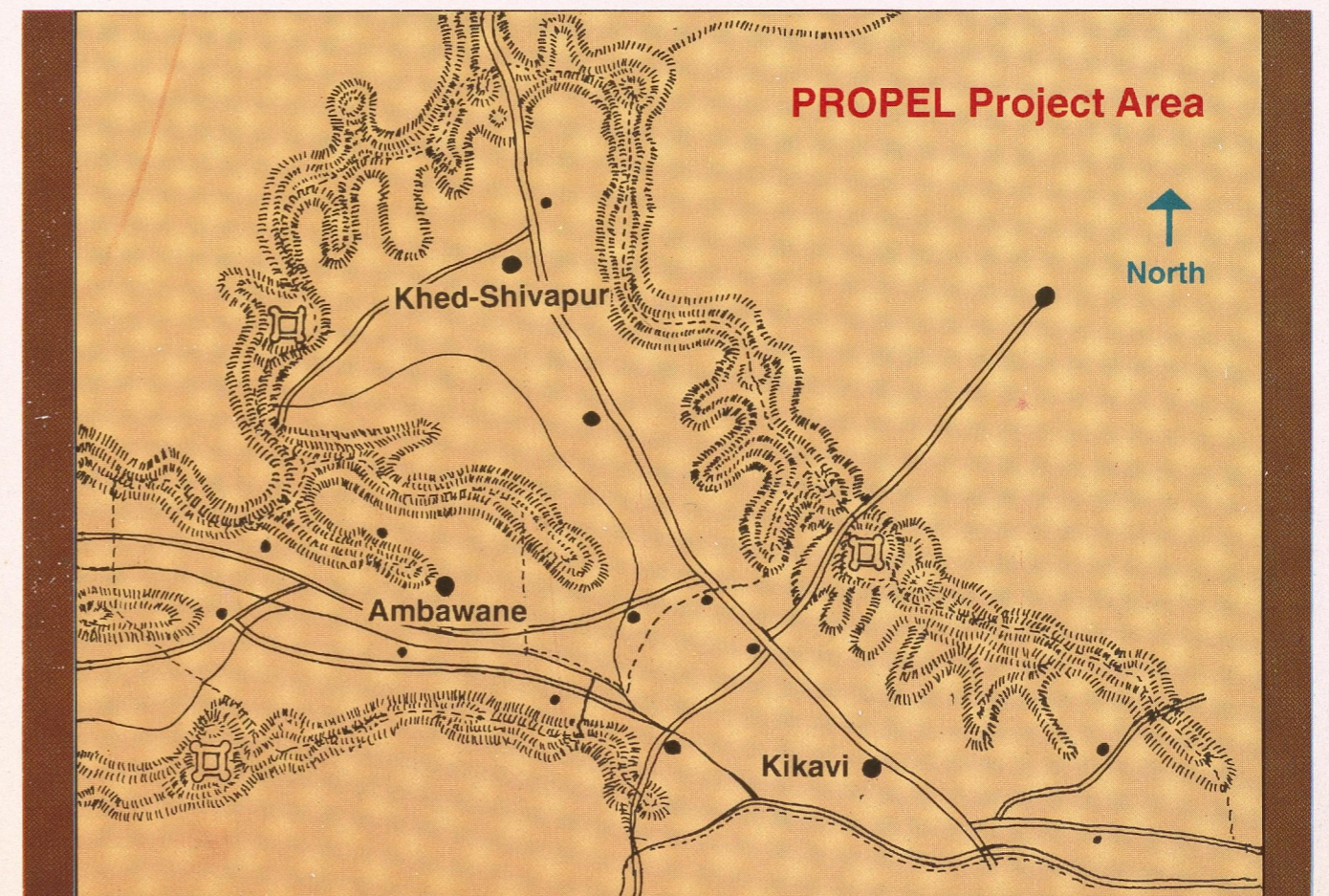
A Class meets in a temporary shade

## Area-based planning in PROPEL

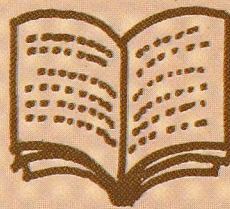
The PROPEL project covers 137 contiguous villages under 85 Gram Panchayats (Village Councils), in three types of agro-climatic areas. The total population of this area is about 1,20,000 contained in about 18,000 households. For the purposes of micro-planning, this area has been divided into three educational sub-areas or circles with a population of 30,000 to 45,000 and each sub-area is further divided into about 5 to 6 Panchayat Clusters per planning sub-area. This decentralization facilitates collective as well as villagewise action by communities.



Impct of NFE



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## Interventions :

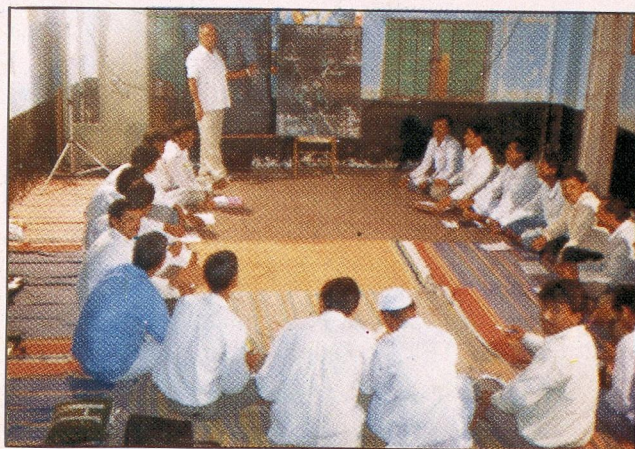
The PROPEL interventions designed to support universalization of primary/elementary education are : (i) Child-Recreation Centres (Preschools), (ii) Women's support-groups for attending to the preschool child's physical, emotional, social and intellectual development, (iii) Retraining of teachers of classes I and II for adjusting their pedagogy with the preschool on one hand and the demands of attainment-oriented learning in Class III on the other, (iv) Part-time, non-formal education for out-of-school children in the 9-14 age-group, (v) Adult-literacy, particularly for women, (vi) Provision of a People's Education House (Jana Shikshan Nilayam) as a library-cum-information centre and cultural-activities centre for the community, (vii) Women's empowerment camps, (viii) Youth awareness camps, (ix) Training of the members of the Panchayats and Village Education Committees in micro-planning techniques, (x) Education Complexes.

## Evidence of Change

In the PROPEL project, the alternative channels of full-time formal education and part-time non-formal education have recently begun to come closer together in a relationship of complementarity. The communities

concerned are getting used to the idea of planning varied educational programmes for all the age-groups in the community. Learning programmes are being organized for youth, women and preschool-age children. The emergence of a possible shape of people-oriented, decentralized system of 'education for all' with qualitative safeguards through guidance by Education Complexes is becoming evident. The PROPEL project expects to enable the rural communities to build up this shape clearly in the next few years. When this process gets concretized, the various innovative aspects of PROPEL could be adapted elsewhere with sufficient promise of success. What PROPEL has demonstrated so far is that in the matter of education for all, breaking the barrier of educational orthodoxy is a tough task but it can be tackled successfully if the communities are mobilized and assisted to determine their own educational and developmental destiny.

The PROPEL Project has been selected by UNESCO as a Mobilizing Project for the Universalization of Primary Education in Asia.



Training in Microplanning



VEC Training

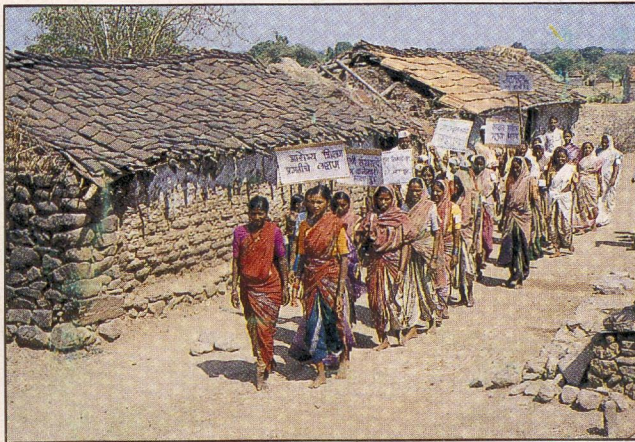
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*Listening to Speech on Child Care in WDG*



*Discussion on Avoiding Minor Accidents in WDG*



*Animators in a Procession*



*Formal School Teachers Preparing Teaching Learning materials.*



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J.P.Naik Path, 128/2, Kothrud, Pune 411029.  
Telephone : 336980 GRAMS : INDINSTED, Kothrud.  
Fax No.: 0212-335239