

प्रगति 2024



EVENT REPORT

Date:

**19TH NOVEMBER
2024**

Venue:

LUCKNOW, U.P.

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INTRODUCTION



This report captures highlights from **"Pragati - Swabhimaan aur Safalta ki Ore"**, a student-centered and student-led event held on **November 19, 2024**, in line with the celebration of **World Children's Day**. Organised jointly by **UNICEF Uttar Pradesh, Samagra Shiksha Uttar Pradesh, and Yeh Ek Soch Foundation**, with support from other UNICEF partners, the event embraced the theme **"Listen to the Future"**, amplifying the voices of children and young people to envision the world they want. This year, students from Hardoi, Sitapur, Barabanki, Lucknow, Raebareli, and Bahraich participated in the event.

It served as a representation and reflection of the broader initiative, **"Special Project on Equity,"** implemented by **UNICEF** in collaboration with **Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan** across 75 districts under the Meena Manch program. Designed to actively engage children, the event provided a dedicated platform (Manch) for collaboration, group learning, and interactive activities.

It aimed to **build self-confidence, challenge gender stereotypes, and inspire holistic growth through real-world experiences.**

Aligned with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, the event emphasized the holistic development of children, focusing on boosting self-confidence, resilience, and a positive self-concept as vital components of education. Self-esteem, a cornerstone of psychological and emotional well-being, plays a critical role in shaping adolescents in both urban and rural areas. It directly influences self-confidence and equips children with the ability to understand their strengths and weaknesses. Integrating the concept of self-esteem into education is closely linked to developing key skills such as communication, problem-solving, and critical thinking. Recognizing its importance, the event represented the need to facilitate the spaces which focus on enhancing these abilities through learning opportunities at school, block, district, and state levels.

327 +

Children from UPS, Composite and KGBVs

51 +

Teachers and Master trainers

50 +

Policy makers, CSOs and educators

50 +

Youth Leaders and volunteers



This year's theme was deeply connected to the foundational step towards achieving gender equity and creating inclusive spaces for children— self-awareness and building self-respect, encapsulated in the message “**मैं खास हूँ**” (**I am special**).

This theme emphasized nurturing a feeling that is inherently personal yet often sought through external validation. By recognizing their own worth, children are empowered to realize their potential, paving the way for success.

OBJECTIVE AND THEME

The essence of **Pragati 2024** lies in emphasizing children's holistic development, extending beyond classrooms and school premises to include access to cross-learning spaces, open discussions, and opportunities to discover new educational methods, showcase talents, and explore untapped potential. “Pragati” also serves as a platform to share best practices and facilitate meaningful dialogues on self-esteem, life skills, and gender equality.

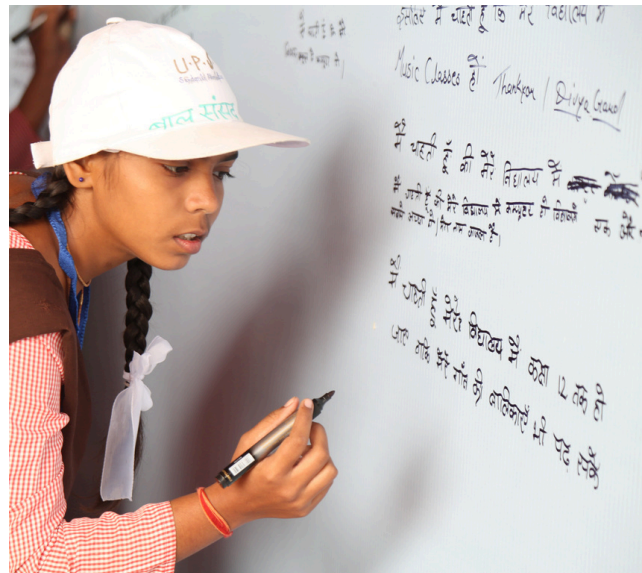
The event served as a model for how such spaces should be regularly facilitated for students in government schools. The excitement of progressing from block-level to district-level events, and eventually to the state level, created a powerful platform for shared learning, self-development, and growth, and

1. Represent the voices of **40 Lac children from 75 districts**, bringing together children, teachers, educators, policymakers, and practitioners to explore key themes related to the adaptation of the self-esteem curriculum.
2. Provide opportunities to **disseminate innovative teaching methodologies, facilitate cross-learning exchanges**, and promote direct interactions between children and policymakers.
3. Share **best practices utilized** in classrooms to enhance the learning experience.
4. **Establish such annual events** as a **regular feature**, introducing a new theme each year to celebrate and nurture the dreams and aspirations of children.

Throughout the day, children and teachers participated in eight thematic workshops, each designed to reflect and promote the holistic development of children.

The workshops covered a range of topics, including breaking gender stereotypes, exploring science and innovation, educational methodologies, climate change, storytelling through puppetry, positive parenting, and life skills. These themes were drawn from a specially designed self-esteem course which also includes engaging materials such as comic books, videos, and activities, which are part of the weekly Saturday sessions conducted with children.

Through songs, theater plays, and other captivating performances written and performed by children, a powerful message on gender equity—“**LLDB - लड़का लड़की दोनों बराबर**” (**Boys and Girls are Equal**)—was effectively conveyed.



The children were given a dedicated space for expressing their thoughts on themes such as:

- **I am confident because...**मुझमें आत्मविश्वास है क्योंकि...
- **Whatever I can dream, I can become because...**मैं जो बनने के सपने देखता/देखती हूं, वो बन सकता/सकती हूं क्योंकि...
- **Mantra for my school because...**मैं चाहती/चाहता हूं कि मेरा विद्यालय...

Where they also shared their messages on their “**Rights as Children,**” making their voices heard and their aspirations clear. While the songs, theater performances, and workshop spaces were captivating, the highlight of the day was the “**Open Manch.**” Here, children overcame their stage fear, performed confidently in front of the audience, and proudly claimed their space.

Additionally, a dedicated space for parents, under the theme “**Positive Parenting and Life Skills,**” provided an opportunity for parents from various districts to reflect, discuss, and share their experiences. The session focused on addressing gender stereotypes and exploring ways to challenge them effectively.

"We are gathered here not just for enjoyment but an opportunity to gain skills and valuable knowledge through shared experiences. This initiative introduces the character of "Meena" as a medium to educate students on critical topics, including gender equality, child rights, protection, development, health, nutrition, climate change, safety, and WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene). The Self-Esteem Project, is a part of the Meena Manch program specially designed to boost students' confidence and self-worth. As part of this project, comic books, videos, activities, teachers training modules and online courses have been launched, providing engaging tools to inspire and empower students and teachers in their personal growth journey." - Ravi Raj Dayal, Education Officer, UNICEF U.P



POWER OF COLLECTIVE

Dr. Mukesh Kumar Singh

Deputy Director/Senior Professional and Unit Incharge, Samagra Shiksha, U.P.

"I noticed a board filled with students' aspirations, such as becoming doctors, teachers, IAS officers, IPS officers, and police officers. I feel that these aspirations might not necessarily be the students' own dreams but could be influenced by others—either inspired by someone pursuing these careers or shaped by the expectations of their parents or guardians. It is important to discover one's passion & goals, one must step out of their comfort zone and actively explore the world around them. Only through such exploration can one identify their true calling."

Dr. Zakari Adam

Chief UNICEF, Uttar Pradesh

"We are gathered here to celebrate Child Rights and Children's Day Week, while it is crucial to know your child rights, understanding your responsibilities is even more important. Over the past 75 years, efforts have been made in India to improve education, safety, health, nutrition, sanitation, and WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene), and raising awareness about these topics, combined with the promotion of self-esteem, is essential for all children."

Ms. Pramila Manoharan

Education Specialist from the National Office UNICEF, Delhi

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Mr. Ritwik Patra

Education Specialist, UNICEF, Uttar Pradesh

"We are gathered here to celebrate Child Rights and Children's Day Week, while it is crucial to know your child rights, understanding your responsibilities is even more important. Over the past 75 years, efforts have been made in India to improve education, safety, health, nutrition, sanitation, and WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene), and raising awareness about these topics, combined with the promotion of self-esteem, is essential for all children."



WORKSHOP SPACES

The next highlight was the official inauguration of the eight theme-based workshop spaces, specially designed and facilitated to create a real-world connection with each theme.

Over the three years of implementing the self-esteem project, it has become clear that children require a balanced combination of curricular and extracurricular activities to develop both cognitive and interpersonal skills. The live workshops at the event offered children a unique opportunity to actively engage with each theme, discovering practical and enjoyable ways to learn and grow.

These spaces brought together teachers and students from various districts, engaging them in activities, games, and innovative methodologies to explore different subjects. The workshops exemplified the power of blending curricular and extracurricular approaches as an effective learning process.

The workshop spaces, set up by the children themselves, were informal and participative. They encouraged active engagement, promoting interaction and collaboration among children and participants. Facilitated by both teachers and students showcasing their innovations, the workshops were inaugurated by esteemed delegates from UNICEF and Samagra Shiksha. Each workshop representative explained and demonstrated their creative ideas to the delegates. The idea and the space received high praise from government officials of Samagra Shiksha, who appreciated the innovative and interactive approach of the workshops.





विज्ञान से आविष्कार तक !



कौन बनेगा जेंडर चैंपियन ?



कहानियों की दुनिया



पपेट की दुनिया !



जैविक खेती



सीखने और सिखाने के नए तरीके !



सकारात्मक अभिभावकता और जीवन कौशल !



पर्यावरण और जल वायु परिवर्तन !

मेरे सपनों का विद्यालय

(उत्तर प्रदेश के 75 जिलों के UPS, KGBVS और कम्पोजिट विद्यालयों के बच्चों द्वारा एकत्रित और संकलित)

1. हमारे विद्यालय में साइंस एवं इनोवैशन की प्रयोगशाला हो जिससे हम नई और रोचक जानकारीयों प्राप्त कर सकें।
2. हमारे विद्यालय में साप्ताहिक परामर्शदाता की नियुक्ति हो जो हमें हमारे करियर के बारे में जानकारी दे सके।
3. हमारे विद्यालय में एक साफ-सुथरा एवं समतल खेल का मैदान हो जिसमें झाड़ियों को प्रत्येक माह कटवाया जाए।
4. हमारे विद्यालय में मानसिक स्वास्थ्य एवं वेलबीइंग पर पुस्तकें एवं रोचक गतिविधियाँ कराई जाएं।
5. हमारे विद्यालय की बिजली सोलर पैनल से आये जिससे हमारे प्राकृतिक संसाधनों की बचत की जा सके।
6. हमारे विद्यालय में समय समय पर विभिन्न प्रतियोगिताएं कराई जाएँ और इसमें दूसरे विद्यालयों को भी जोड़ा जाये।
7. हमारे विद्यालय व उसके आस पास का वातावरण प्रदूषण मुक्त हो।
8. हमारा विद्यालय एवं इसका बाहरी क्षेत्र किसी भी प्रकार के नशे से मुक्त हो।
9. हमारे दिव्यांग सहपाठियों के लिए स्कूल व अन्य संसाधनों तक पहुच को सुनिश्चित किया जाए एवं सुगम बनाया जाए।
10. हमारा विद्यालय, परिवार तथा समुदाय भयमुक्त व हिंसमुक्त हो।

यह घोषणापत्र उन सपनों और विचारों का संग्रह है, जो बच्चों ने अपने "सपनों के स्कूल" के बारे में साझा किए हैं। यह उनकी शिक्षा और स्कूल जीवन से जुड़ी उम्मीदों और आकांक्षाओं का प्रतिबिंब है। एक जिम्मेदार भागीदार (स्टेकहोल्डर) के रूप में, इसे साकार करना हमारा कर्तव्य है।



HIGHLIGHTS

The self esteem song!

Prepared by the students of CS Sandauli, Umapur, Barabanki, the song centered on embracing the diversity and uniqueness of every individual and our role in nurturing that environment for them. **The lyrics reflected the insights and lessons the children gained from the self-esteem sessions conducted with them.**

Their ability to process this knowledge and creatively share it with peers through song was yet another standout moment of the day!

Duniya Rang Birangi - a theatre play!

Comic books provided students with the opportunity to think beyond traditional textbooks, using creative methods like art, song, and theater to promote the message of self-esteem. One such inspiring play was presented at the event by the students of KGBV Chinhhat, Lucknow.

The play highlighted the theme **“In this society, everyone is equal. We are all beautiful creations in our unique ways. Some are tall, some short, some slim, some healthy—each has a special quality.”** The performance included a vibrant song with lyrics celebrating diversity:

“दुनिया रंग बिरंगी देखो, दुनिया रंग बिरंगी ,
ये दुनिया है एक रंगोली, अलग अलग है भाषा बोली,
दुनिया रंग बिरंगी देखो, दुनिया रंग बिरंगी ,
आसमान में उड़ती है जैसे साड़ी काइट्स,
अलग है सबके वैसी बॉडी टाइम्स”

The room was alive with joy and energy as the participants applauded the play, expressing their appreciation for the children's creativity and powerful message.

“I experienced a period of depression for nearly two years after becoming visually impaired. Despite the challenges, I went on to work as a special educator. It’s important not to let barriers define us. We should not limit ourselves but instead find ways to navigate and overcome the challenges.” - Hemendra Pratap Singh, assistant manager at RRB, partially blind, shared his inspiring story with the children

"You can pursue any career you desire, as there is no work specifically designated for one gender."

**- Ekta Singh, IAS,
Additional State Project Director of
Samagra Shiksha**

Ms. Ekta Singh, Additional State Project Director of Samagra Shiksha, **graced the event and engaged with the facilitators of each workshop space.** She was escorted by two student leaders who narrated the event highlights and provided an overview of the workshops. **Ekta Ji shared her aspirations for education with the students, inspiring them with her presence as a female IAS officer—a role model many children look up to.**

The students eagerly asked her numerous questions, including how she became an IAS officer, what it takes to succeed in the civil services, and how they could prepare for it. Ekta Ji patiently addressed their queries, motivating them with her responses. **The students also had the opportunity to present their *Manifesto of Demands* to her, which she appreciated.**

In addition to this, **Ms. Ekta Singh, Mr. Mukesh Kumar Singh, Dr. Pramila Manoharan , and Mr. Ravi Raj Dayal presented certificates to teachers and children who had excelled in district-level and block-level social action projects under the self-esteem initiative.** This gesture not only celebrated their achievements but also nurtured a sense of healthy competition among the students, encouraging them to perform even better in the coming year to earn recognition.



The event was one of the most celebrated highlights of the year, providing a platform for the culmination of the year of efforts, including self-esteem sessions, action projects, community engagement and the learnings of the students. More than just a celebration, it marked the **beginning of a transformative approach, setting an example of how cross-learning spaces can empower children to understand, engage in dialogue, and explore the world beyond their schools and villages.**

The event **demonstrated that for children, the sky is truly the limit.** It emphasized the importance of enablers in their journey, making growth a two-way process—**not just policies and programs reaching children, but children actively participating, sharing suggestions, and strengthening the education system that serves them.**



Best Practices

➔ Led and facilitated by children

Meena Manch activities are child-led, with Power Angels taking the lead. The event showcased clear child leadership, with all performances and anchoring handled by the children.

➔ Self- Esteem games

A compendium of games aimed at boosting children's self-esteem while enhancing their decision-making and cognitive skills.

➔ Courses for teachers

Teachers explored new teaching methodologies through cross-sharing spaces. Specialized course was developed to support teachers in better adapting and delivering the curriculum.

➔ Community action projects

Before the main state-level event, 623 block-level community action projects were conducted by students, with the best performances earning a "Manch" to showcase their talent at the main event.

Verbatim



Children are accustomed to reading about characters in comic books, but experiencing the essence and strength of the program in person creates a deeper connection. The learn-by-seeing-and-doing methodology not only enhances their understanding but also inspires them, I feel privileged to be part of this amazing space. – **Jyoti Singh KGBV Chinhāt, Lucknow**

I feel so happy to be part of this program! It gave me the chance to meet new friends and realize that there are many other children like me involved in this initiative. Talking directly to the government officials was an amazing experience—I asked so many questions, and they answered everything so clearly. I aspire to become an IAS officer one day, just like Ekta Ma'am! – **Divya Gaur, Composite School, Sandauli , Umapur, Barabanki**

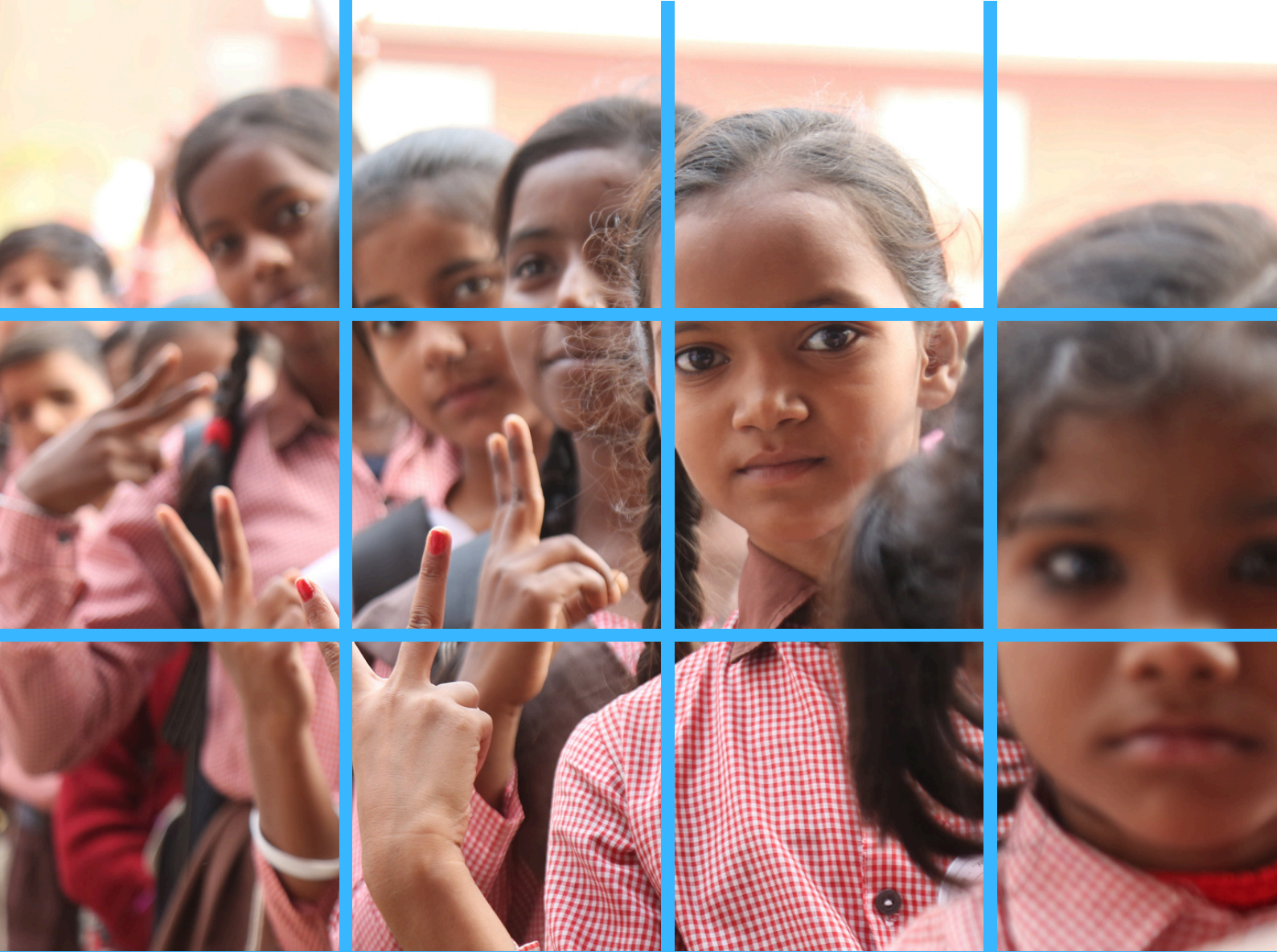


This is my first time anchoring, and it feels amazing! I've realized that I have this skill, and I'm so excited to be performing in front of 350 children. This event is a fantastic learning experience—I got to meet new people, participate in three workshops, and even learned how to make puppets! – **Anuj, Composite School, Sandauli , Umapur, Barabanki**

I love being here! The decorations and workshops are helping me learn new things, and I'm getting the chance to understand the comic book characters better. These characters have become role models for me—I want to be like Adrak, the one who is very intelligent.
– **Diksha Bharti, KGBV Chinhāt, Lucknow**



"Many interesting and informative things have been shared here, and we will definitely convey them to other children." – **Radhika, from UPS Hulaskheda, Lucknow**



Thank You