

Theme: Leading Good Governance in Schools

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“Transforming Ghari Upper Primary School Through Good Governance”

Abstract

Ghari Upper Primary School located at Ghari Awang Leikai, Imphal West, Manipur is a school with a very prospective future, although the school was established in the late 1950's and with a long period of poor infrastructure and very less enrollment of students, it was a turning point in the early months of 2022 with a new headteacher appointed, an energetic team of well trained teachers, a supportive School Management Committee formed and the construction of three new rooms, there is no looking back and the school has been progressing since then. At present the school has an enrollment of 68 students. The school aims to inspire and empower its students to thrive academically, socially and personally. Encouraging them to explore the diverse curriculum, introducing various extracurricular activities and life skill sessions to effectively navigate daily life and deal with various challenges of life.

Introduction

Good governance is fundamental to creating a thriving educational environment that fosters academic excellence, social inclusion, and personal growth. Ghari Upper Primary School, located in Ghari Awang Leikai, Imphal West, under the Zonal Education Office, Zone I, Department of Education (S), Imphal West, Manipur, has undergone a remarkable transformation in the last two to three years. With a long period of poor infrastructure and very low enrollment of students, it was a turning point in the year 2022 with the construction of three new rooms, a new head in-charge, an energetic team of well trained teachers, and a supportive School Management Committee there is no looking back and the school has been progressing since then. At present the school has an enrollment of 68 students and 10 teachers serving. The school aims to inspire and empower its students to thrive academically, socially and personally. Encouraging them to explore the diverse curriculum, introducing various extracurricular activities and life skill sessions to effectively navigate daily life and deal with various challenges of life.

This case study highlights and focuses on the transformative journey of Ghari Upper Primary School. The school's journey from decades of poor infrastructure, overcoming challenges, to becoming a promising institution inspired by the principles of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. With a renewed focus on foundational literacy, inclusivity, innovation, and community engagement, Ghari Upper Primary School serves as a testament to how a vision-driven approach and good governance can redefine and elevate school education. This case study explores how leadership, community involvement, and strategic initiatives brought about significant changes and aligned the institution with the principles of accountability, transparency, and inclusivity.

Background of the school

Ghari Upper Primary School is a government upper primary school located in a semi-urban area which is not far from the Imphal city and the area comprises of socio-



economically diverse backgrounds. The school is situated in an educational hub and is surrounded by many private schools. The institution caters to students from socio-economically backward families, with a significant portion coming from underprivileged families. The school, established in the late 1950s, had suffered from poor infrastructure, low community trust, and limited academic outcomes for decades. With schools budding up everywhere which often lacks in proper infrastructure, and inadequate child-friendly spaces, Ghari Upper Primary School is a school with a beautiful campus with spacious surroundings which when properly planned and developed will be a commendable school with a very conducive

environment.

Despite its challenges, Ghari Upper Primary School has a strong potential for improvement due to its spacious campus, a committed teaching staff, and supportive parents. In 2021, under new leadership, dedicated teachers and with the active involvement of the School Management Committee (SMC), the school embarked on a journey to implement good governance practices.

Challenges Identified

The school faced several challenges:

1. Perception of Government Schools: Parents lacked trust in government schools and many parents preferred private schools, even with inferior infrastructure, due to perceived quality differences.
2. Weak Parent-Teacher Collaboration: Limited engagement with parents hindered students' holistic development.
3. Infrastructure Deficiencies: Limited classrooms, inadequate furniture, and lack of digital facilities hindered effective learning.
4. Foundational Skills in reading, writing and numeracy: Students struggled with reading and comprehending English by Class V, necessitating urgent intervention
5. Administrative Inefficiencies: Delayed decision-making and lack of accountability impacted the overall functioning of the school.

Vision and Mission Statement

The first step was to redefine the school's vision:

- Vision: To create a nurturing environment where every student thrives

academically, socially, and emotionally.

- Mission: To provide quality education through collaborative efforts, innovation, and community engagement.

Leadership and Governance Approach

The appointment of a visionary headmistress in January 2022 marked the turning point for Ghari Upper Primary School. Her leadership style was rooted in principles of good governance, which emphasized transparency, accountability, participation, and inclusivity.

Strategic Planning

The school developed a five-year strategic plan with clearly defined goals:

1. Improving infrastructure and learning resources.
2. Strengthening teacher capacity.
3. Enhancing student outcomes through targeted interventions.
4. Building strong partnerships with parents and the community.

With emphasis to the improvement at the grassroot level and a mission to attain the foundational literacy and numeracy skills of the students various activities and teaching learning aids are developed at the school level and used by the teachers. And with the implementation of FLN calendar for the students an overall improvement in the performance of the students in the pre-primary and primary section is seen.



Hand print activity of pre-primary students, creating a sense of belonging to the school

With re-organizing and beautification of classrooms, which provided an enhanced learning environment, boosted the enrollment of students. Door to door home visits were done in and around the community to identify school going children.

- Building as Learning Aid (BaLA): To create a more welcoming and Child-Centric Learning Environment the teachers initiated a project and the classrooms were transformed into colourful, interactive spaces to foster creativity and curiosity.
- Morning Assembly Activities: Daily morning assembly includes prayers, exercises, and motivational thoughts to promote discipline and positivity. Importance is given to the conduct of morning assembly each day. Starting the Day with remembering the Almighty. The morning assembly is set as a bonding time for everyone fostering a sense of harmony among students and teachers and also to start the day on a

collective note. It is a platform to share important announcements, upcoming events and a platform to reinforce positive behavior and virtues.

Alignment with NEP 2020

The school's journey aligns closely with several key principles of NEP 2020, including:

1. Access and Equity: Providing education to underprivileged students from lower economic classes.
2. Holistic and Multidisciplinary Education: Offering a diverse curriculum, extracurricular activities, and life skill sessions.
3. Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN): Emphasizing foundational skills as a national priority.
4. Community Engagement: Involving parents, guardians, and local stakeholders in the educational process.
5. Environmental Sustainability: Encouraging environmental responsibility through cleanliness drives and tree plantations.
6. School Governance: Strengthening leadership, teacher capacity, and stakeholder collaboration.

Transparency in Decision-Making

It is seen that one of the key aspects to development of a school and leading with good governance is the transparency in decision making. Regular SMC meetings are held to discuss school policies, budgets, and progress. Parents and teachers are encouraged to voice concerns and provide feedback.



Focus on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy

The school adopted a structured FLN calendar developed and provided by the Zonal Education Office of the Education Department. Teachers developed innovative and interactive Teaching Aids learning materials to make lessons engaging and accessible.

Strengthening Parent-Teacher Collaboration and Community Engagement

- Regular parent-teacher meetings are organized to share students' progress, areas

for improvement and to build trust and partnership with parents. Quarterly meetings foster a collaborative approach to student development. Regular progress reviews are also shared during these meetings which help track individual student achievements and identify areas for improvement.



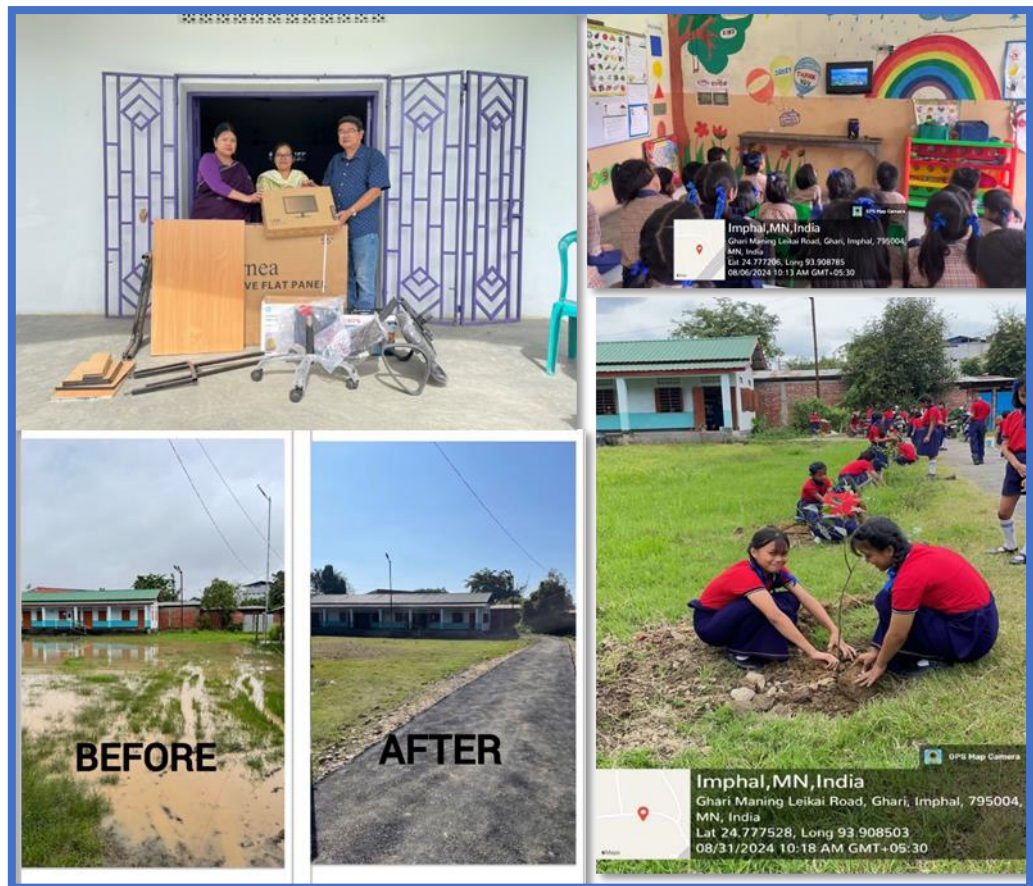
Community Outreach Programs

The school Recognises the importance of community involvement, and various activities are taken up in this line of action.

- Celebration of Mother's Day: Strengthened the bond between students, teachers, and parents, fostering emotional connections.
- Nurses Day Awareness Program: As a part of community outreach program, Local healthcare professionals were invited to educate students about hygiene and first aid.

Infrastructure Development

- Resource Mobilization: The school leveraged government grants and local support in construction of approach roads, install digital teaching aids, and improve sanitation facilities.



- Green Campus Initiative: Tree plantations and a school garden project were undertaken to create a healthy learning environment.

Extracurricular and Life Skills Development

Activities such as sports, cultural and literary events, and life skills workshops are integrated into the curriculum. Students are encouraged to participate in the events to build confidence and teamwork skills.



- Youth and Eco Club: Formed to instill environmental awareness through tree plantations and cleanliness drives.

Capacity Building for Teachers and Leadership Development



Teachers are encouraged to attend regular workshops on ICT modern pedagogical techniques, emotional intelligence, and classroom management. A professional learning community is also formed by the teachers of the school.

The headmistress also participated in the School Leadership Development Program by SLA, SCERT, Manipur. This training enhanced her ability to lead effectively, inspiring her team to adopt a systematic and constructive approach to education.

Achievements of the school

Awarded with first prize in story telling competition and second in slogan writing competition in connection with Nipun Awareness campaign organized by the Department of Education

Students participating in road safety month and project Veer Gatha

Students participating in slogan writing contest in connection with Ayushman Bharat Diwas organized by the Office of the District Commissioner, Imphal West.

Outcomes and Impact

The school's governance reforms brought measurable improvements:

1. Improved Academic Performance
 - Student pass rates increased by 30% within two years.
 - Foundational literacy and numeracy skills improved significantly, with over 85% of students achieving grade-level competency.
2. Enhanced Community Trust
 - Enrollments increased as parents gained confidence in the school's quality.
 - Parental involvement in school activities doubled, reflecting stronger partnerships.
3. Infrastructure Growth
 - In addition to the existing three classrooms, five more classrooms are also going to be constructed.
 - The campus became a cleaner, greener space, creating a conducive environment for learning.
4. Empowered Teachers
 - Collaborative practices fostered a sense of ownership and accountability among staff.
5. Holistic Student Development
 - Students became more confident and engaged, participating actively in extracurricular activities.
 - Life skills programs equipped students to navigate daily challenges effectively.

Lessons Learned

The transformation of Ghari Upper Primary School provides valuable insights:

1. Leadership Matters: A visionary headmistress, supported by a skilled and motivated team, can drive systemic change.
2. Community Involvement: Building strong relationships with parents and local stakeholders is crucial for school development.
3. Resourcefulness: Even with limited resources, creative teaching aids and initiatives can significantly impact student learning.
4. Holistic Approach: Addressing academic, social, and environmental aspects of education leads to well-rounded development.

Conclusion

The case of Ghari Upper Primary School demonstrates that good governance is a transformative force in education. By fostering transparency, accountability, and community participation, the school overcame systemic challenges and achieved remarkable progress.

As schools across the country strive to align with the National Education Policy 2020, the principles of good governance—effective leadership, collaboration, and innovation—will be crucial in ensuring equitable and quality education for all. Ghari Upper Primary School serves as an inspiring example of how these principles can be successfully implemented to create lasting change. The transformation of Ghari Upper Primary School is a shining example of how NEP 2020 principles can be applied to create a positive and lasting impact on public education. By focusing on foundational literacy, community engagement, teacher empowerment, and holistic development, the school has not only addressed its challenges but also laid a strong foundation for future success.

With continued efforts and a commitment to excellence, Ghari Upper Primary School has the potential to emerge as a model institution, inspiring other schools to undertake similar journeys of transformation. This case study underscores the importance of leadership, collaboration, and innovation in achieving the vision of NEP 2020—a future where quality education is accessible to all.