

Soyla GP: School Management Committee's persistent efforts ensure children passing 12th Standard for the first time in the village history

Soyla Gram Panchayat (population as per 2011 Census: total 452, females 220, males 232) of Bhuj Block is located in Kutch district in the state of Gujarat, India. The village is located at about 67 KM from Bhuj, the nearest town and the district headquarters. Children's population below 6 years includes a total of 70 (female 36, male 34). The village is largely populated by Muslim community.

Being a remote and small village in a dry vast land area, Soyla is an economically poor village. The primary school has 1-8 standards. There are a total of 73 students, including 33 girls. Addition of the 8th standard was the achievement of the SMC (School Management Committee), as a result of its members applying for and persuading the district authorities. For the 9th standard, the students have to go to Khari village, 3 KM away, and for 11 and 12 standards, to Khavda, the Taluka place, 11 KM away.

Due to the above challenge of distance, the children used to drop out after 8th or 9th standard, and none ever passed 12th standard. The SMC arranged for local transport for the school girls and boys. Due to the SMC's efforts, the children passed 12th standard last year (2019) for the first time.

Leadership: Mr. Ramzanbhai, Elected Representative of the Gram Panchayat and member of the SMC, regularly visits the school, checks attendance of the children, and attends all the SMC meetings. SMC decisions are coordinated with the GP for support. In the SMC meetings, important decisions related to drinking water (for example, RO plant and piped water) were made and effectively implemented. Setu Abhiyan has been providing support in the education sector in this village since 2008 by awareness generation activities through street plays and community meetings. Setu Abhiyan is also supporting the GPDP process through facilitating Mahila Sabha and Gram Sabha. Soyla GP has 8 wards with 150 households, and Ward Sabhas are also organised for GPDP.