

Okhamandal Education Roadmap

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Background and Objectives

Tata Chemical Limited (TCL) is located in Mithapur in the Okhamandal taluka of the Saurashtra region, in the Jamnagar district of Gujarat. Historically, key focus areas for the Tata Society for Rural Development (TCSR) have been natural resource management (agriculture, rain water management and livelihoods) and income generation (women's self-help groups and rural enterprise development programmes). However, TCL and TCSR have recently expressed a firm commitment to invest more resources in education, and to increase the priority and profile of educational initiatives. Accordingly, the objective of my Tata International Social Entrepreneurship Scheme (TISES) project was to develop a roadmap to improve educational attainment and performance in Okhamandal in a systematic and focused manner.

Methodology

Extensive research was conducted into the country-specific political, socio-cultural and economic factors which negatively impact upon educational attainment in Okhamandal. Empirical research included visits to 25 primary schools, three high schools, two fishing communities, five village leaders, five self-help groups, five visits to family homes and numerous discussions with villagers.

The Challenge and Solution

The key educational challenges identified include those relating to enrolment, attendance and 'drop out'; girl child education; quality of education and migrant communities. In response, a comprehensive five-year roadmap was designed for improving literacy, in the broad target areas of educational administration; girls' education; awareness and quality; teacher development; technology; informal education and migrant communities. The expected benefit to the local Okhamandal people is increased access to education of an improved quality, through the ongoing assistance of TCSR.