



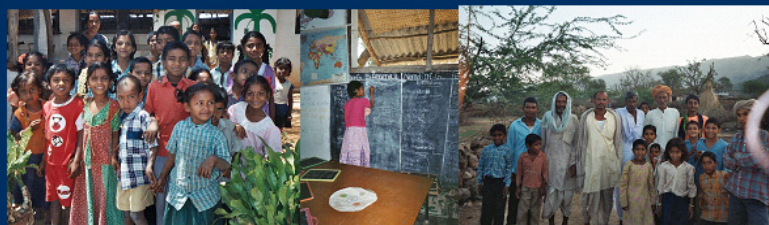
**Consortium for Research on
Educational Access,
Transitions and Equity**

**Changing Framework of Local Governance
and Community Participation in
Elementary Education in India**

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Summary

In recent years, strengthening and better functioning of local governance have become prime concerns of educational reform agenda. Establishment of effective local governance has been part of overall changes in educational governance for several years in many countries including India. It is now widely recognized that effective local governance considerably impacts on access to education as well as the enrolment, retention and learning experiences of children in school. It is in this context, that this paper provides an overview of the changing framework of governance of elementary education and community participation in India with a special focus on its role in improving the participation of children. An attempt has also been made to examine the extent to which grassroots level functionaries and local bodies like *panchayat* and VEC are able to get involved in decision making processes and different approaches that have been taken by different states in regards to local governance of education. Drawing references from recent efforts made by different states, the paper has tried to establish a link between effectiveness of local governance and issues regarding access, equity and quality of school education. While discussing the changing framework of local governance, the paper critically examines the guiding principles of governance reform from two perspectives. 'Top-down' and 'bottom-up' approaches are discussed, in terms of ensuring the effectiveness of the system and empowering people for active participation in decentralized decision making process.

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