

Asha for Education™

Site Visit Questionnaire

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www.ashanet.org

Dear Volunteer

Thanks for conducting this site visit.

The following set of questions is only a suggested guideline. Some of the following questions may not be relevant or applicable to the particular project you are visiting, but please do try to answer as many of them as possible. Please note that Part sB & C necessitate that the information be gathered through conversations with the children and their parents, and not simply the group's teachers and staff.

Please feel free to attach any documents/photos you feel are pertinent to the project.

Thanks.

- Asha for Education

Date: June 22, 17

Name of the Project: Vocational Training Program for Unskilled Youth

**Name of the Organisation Running the Project (if different): Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama,
Sargachi, Murshidabad**

Was your site visit announced? Yes, it was planned No, it was a surprise visit

	Project Contact	You Name (Asha volunteer conducting the visit)
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PART A: Particulars about the organization and its environment

1. What are the different focus areas of the organization? (give a rough estimate of the % of their total effort/funding)

Community development 10% Education 40% Health 20%
Other 10% (please specify) Vocational Training 20%

2. What is the administrative structure of the group (e.g. Board of Directors/Grassroots-based)?

RKMA Sargachi has a Board of Directors comprising the President, Treasurer and Secretary. Secretary is the chief functionary. He looks after day to day office / project administration, fund raising etc.

3. Are there any other organizations working in the area providing any one or all of the services provided by the visited organization? (Briefly mention their names and their objectives)

Organization	Objectives of the organization
Not seen.	

PART B: The organization and the community it serves

(Information to be gathered from parents and children)

1. Approximately how many families live in the area?

Vocational Training Institute covers nearly 3000 families and Ashrama covers more than 6000.

2. What do the parents do for a living? (Agricultural worker, Daily wage laborer etc.)

Parents are mainly engaged in agriculture, daily wage labour, small vending etc.

3. At the time of enrolment, does the school ask for the names of both parents?

Yes No, just the father's name No, just the mother's name

4. How often do the teachers meet the parents?

Never, if not necessary.

5. How do the parents participate in the organization's activities? (e.g. by contributing their time, money or labor in the school's activities etc.)

They participate mostly as volunteers. Some receive honorarium.

6. Are there any Government Schools in the area? Yes No

7. If yes, how far are the Government Schools from the community?

Government educational school is situated within 2 Kms, while government vocational training centres are more than 10 Kms away.

8. Why did the parents choose this school over the Government School?

Other than quality education, RKMA strengthens human values, such as character building, personality development and social responsibilities. The students also get good advice technically and morally throughout the life.

9. When you visited, how many children were present in the class? 500

What is the regular class strength? 30

Comments:

10. Do the children seem to enjoy coming to school?

Yes, as they get quality education and other value oriented lessons for their future.

PART C: Project particulars

(Information to be gathered from students and staff)

1. What is the mode of teaching in the school? (Check the appropriate choices)

- A. Formal (State Board, Central Board etc.) **till what class?**
 B. Non-Formal Education (NFE) **do the students also attend formal school?**
 C. Vocational
 D. Other . Please specify _____

2. If A (Formal), up to what grade(LKG, 5th, 7th etc.) does the school conduct classes?

Not applicable

3. *If B (Non-Formal Education) how many of the children also attend formal schools in the area?*

Not applicable

If none do, does the project plan this for the future?

4. *If Non-Formal Education, does the organization create its own study material (books, games)?*

Not applicable

5. *If C (Vocational), what do the children do after they finish training?*

i) Most of them get employment

ii) Some work on their own as individual contractors

iii) Some of them return for advanced training to better themselves

6. *How many staff or volunteers are recruited from the community?* Staff - 27

How many of the staff are women? 7

7. *How many teachers have left the school in the past one year, and why?*

None.

8. *How many new teachers have joined in the past year?* 9

9. *Does the organization train the teachers?*

Yes

No

If yes, how do they provide the training?

10. *How much is the staff paid?* Not on par as Government but around 4 - 10K

Is it on par with the salary paid to the staff in the Government schools?

Yes

No

PART D: Financial resources of the organization

(Feedback from the person conducting the site visit)

1. *Do you think the proposed amounts in the budget are reasonable?*

Yes

No

Maybe

2. *Are all items covered in the budget?* Yes No Maybe

Comments:

3. *Is there anything you think should be added or removed from the budget?*

Yes No

If you recommend any changes to the budget, please explain your reasons for this.

4. *Did you discuss the proposed changes with the project? If so, please describe their response.*

N/A

PART E: Comments

(Feel free to attach documents if necessary)

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RKMA Sargachi has requested me to convey their heartfelt gratitude to Asha-Athens for financially supporting the program and assisting them in this process. Currently, 597 students are enrolled in the vocational courses conducted by the institute, among which 349 are boys and 248 are girls. At present, 20 courses are being offered in the vocational training program. There are 27 staffs/teachers engaged in running the program. Among the 27, nine are new recruits, who joined during the last one year. This program has undergone a marked increase in the number of courses as well as students in the last few years. The training programs are in demand and benefiting a lot of unskilled and unemployed youth belonging to the Sargachi/Murshidabad belt. Continued support over the years by Asha - Athens has generated a lot of enthusiasm among the RKMA authorities as well as the students, since external sources of funds are really scarce these days. Whenever I visit the Sargachi Ashrama, I come across constant stream of ideas on innovation and endeavors to push the quality and quantity of services offered by the Ashrama to the local community. Last year, I have interviewed many students who had either been successful in setting up small scale business units or were employed in local business. Their feedback had been documented in my last report. Having been in constant touch with the project for the last five years, I am convinced that RKMA and Asha are making a difference in the lives of the people, most of whom are under unfortunate socio-economic hardships in this region. The RKMA-Asha association should continue in the future.

RKMA Sargachi appreciates and expects continuation of your support in their future endeavors.

Site Visit Report

June 21-22, 2017



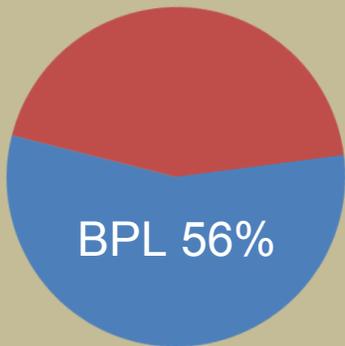
Ramakrishna

Mission Ashrama

**(RKMA), Sargachi,
Murshidabad, WB.**

Dr. Ajoy K. Saha

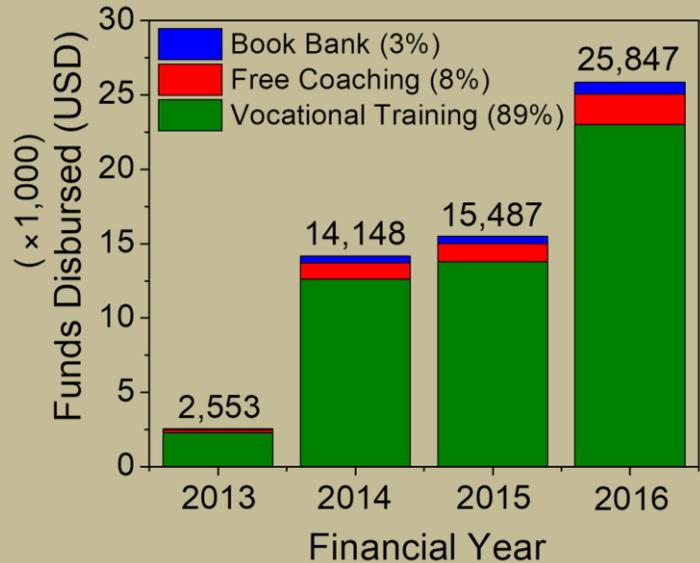
Murshidabad district in West Bengal ranks among the poorest districts in entire India. 56% people fall under below poverty line (BPL) category.



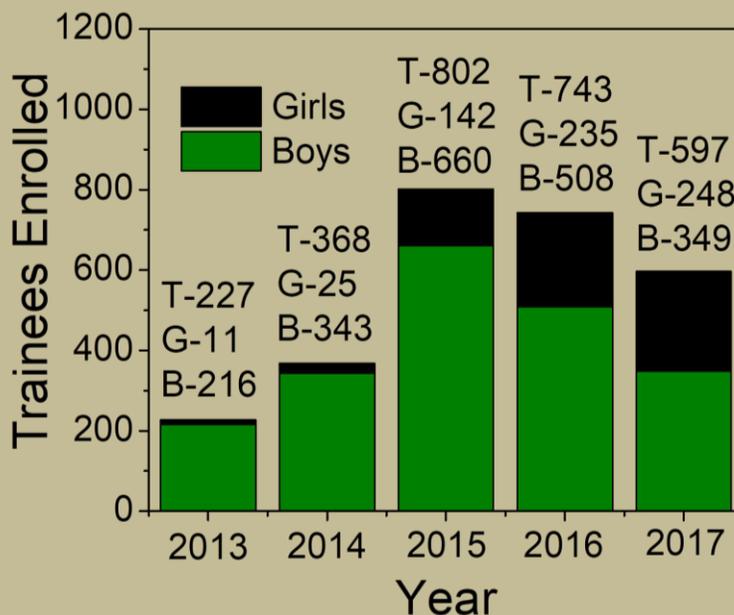
Sources

- National Sample Survey (NSS), 2009
- International Institute for Population Sciences (IIPS), 2010

Note: The number of courses offered in the vocational training program has increased during the last five years. Funds disbursed to the project have also gone up over the years to keep up with the rising expenses. Currently, 20 courses are being offered.



Note: There has been a substantial increase in student enrollment in recent years. Although, the total number varied over the years, the no. of girl students showed a steady increase. (T - Total, G - Girls, B - Boys)



I have visited RKMA during June 21-22, 2017. In the 2016-2017 financial - year, vocational trainings in several trades are being conducted at RKMA Sargachi which are financed by Asha for Education, Athens Chapter. A list of the trades and the number of students enrolled in each of these courses are listed below. This year, a total of 529 students are enrolled, of which 248 are girls and 349 boys.

Vocational Trades: RKMA Sargachi 2016-2017

Course No. and Name	No. of Students	Male	Female	DURATION
1. COMPUTER FUNDAMENTAL	100	69	31	3 MONTHS
2. COMPUTER HARDWARE	12	12		3 MONTHS
3. TALLY	40	35	5	6 MONTHS
4. BASIC ELECTRICAL	42	42		3 MONTHS
5. ELECTRICAL FAN & MOTOR	9	9		3 MONTHS
6. BASIC REFRIGERATION & AC	63	63		6 MONTHS
7. SOLAR POWER	16	16		5 MONTHS
8. KNITTING	16		16	1 MONTHS
9. BASIC AUTOMOBILE SERVICING OF 2 & 3 WHEELER	7	7		6 MONTHS
10. BASIC AUTOMOBILE SERVICING OF 4 WHEELER	12	12		6 MONTHS
11. LAB ASSISTANT	42	25	17	6 MONTHS
12. PHYSIOTHERAPY	47	23	24	6 MONTHS
13. WATER PURIFIER	13	13		2 MONTHS
14. GLASS BEADS JEWELLERY MAKING	53	4	49	15 DAYS
15. TERRACOTTA	10	4	6	2 MONTHS
16. TAILORING (SMO 1 ST)	25		25	360 HRS
17. TAILORING (SMO 2 nd)	25		25	360 HRS
18. TAILORING (GCT)	25		25	420 HRS
19. TAILORING (APSQC)	25		25	720 HRS
20. MOTOR DRIVING	15	15		50 DAYS
TOTAL =	597	349	248	

Total number of staffs/teachers engaged in running the vocational training program = 27. Among the twenty-seven, nine are new recruits, who have joined during the last year.

1

Ceramic/glass Beads and Jewelry Manufacture.

RKMA hosted a training session on jewelry and bead manufacturing in January 2017. The training was imparted by Central Glass and Ceramic Research Institute (CGCRI), Khurja Centre. The training was conducted for a period of 15 days. Four technical staffs, including Mr. Yad Ram from CGCRI, Khurja conducted the training.

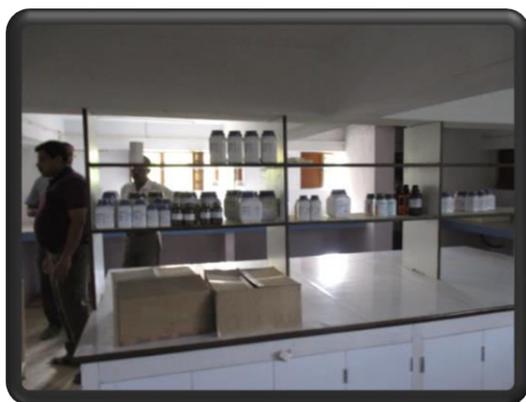


CGCRI authorities taught how to produce ceramic and glass beads and allied jewelry using these materials to interested students and staff of RKMA.



Soil Testing Laboratory.

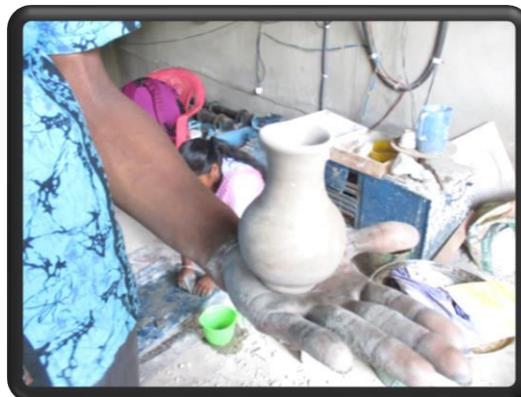
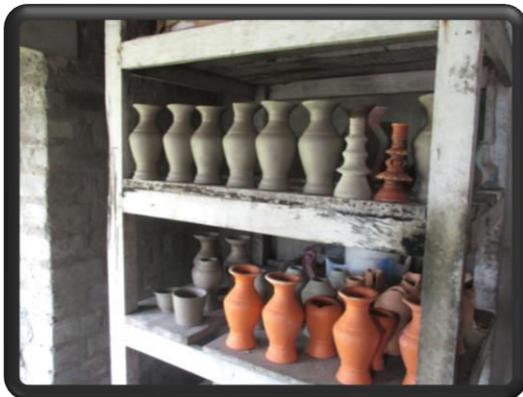
A new research centre for soil testing is currently being developed at the institute. Pictures below show the recent progress and activities. Labs are being set up and workers can be seen engaged in furnishing some of the newly built lab rooms. Chemicals and glass wares have been purchased. A new Atomic Absorption Spectrometer (AAS) instrument from Perkin Elmer for chemical analysis of soils has also been installed in the lab (picture provided). This laboratory has been funded (12 lakhs) by state govt. to assist agricultural research (soil testing), that are currently being conducted at RKMA Sargachi.



Government has donated all the instruments. This is a one - time grant and they will not be providing any recurring and maintenance expenses. The AAS device will be used to ascertain the soil quality by measuring its elemental content.

Ceramic Pottery Unit.

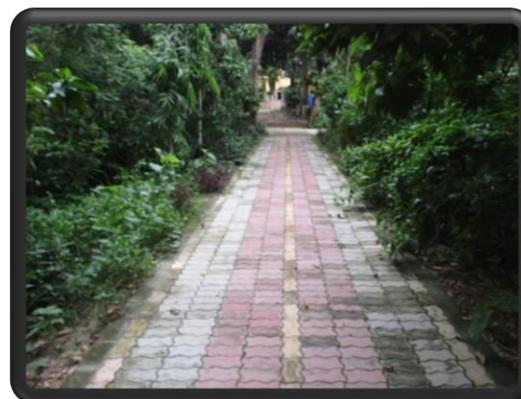
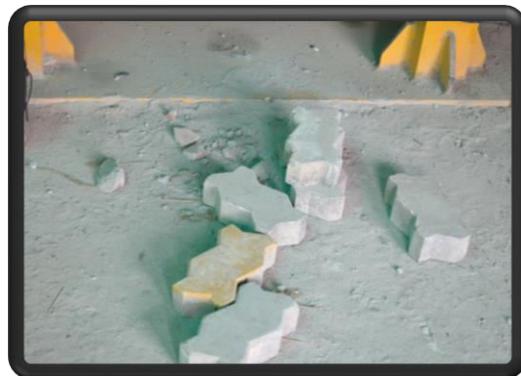
Since 2016, a new course on pottery manufacturing is being conducted at RKMA Sargachi to train students on this craft. Currently, about 10 students are undergoing training. Some of the products developed can be seen in the pictures below.



Jigger Jolly machine and furnace used in the fabrication of pottery can be seen in the pictures above.

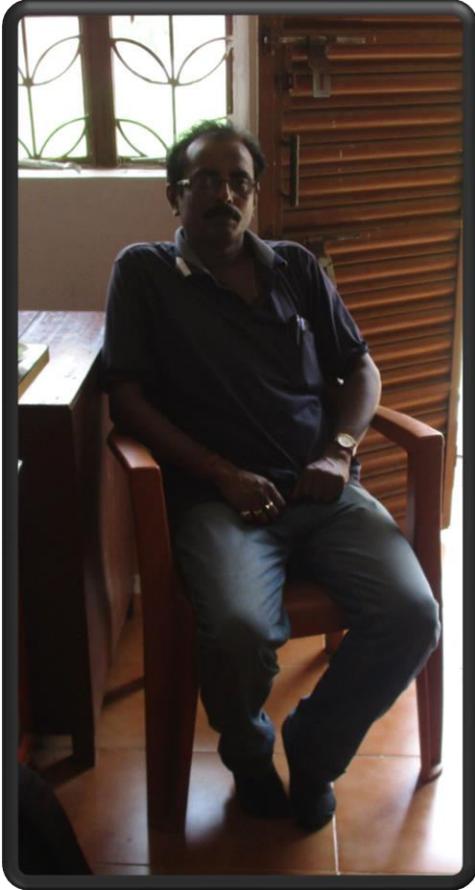
Ceramic Fly-ash Brick Production Unit.

In the previous reports, I wrote about the ceramic brick production unit, which can produce about 90 bricks per day. Some of the bricks produced by the unit have been quality tested. They were used to pave the roads of the institute itself. In the pictures below, the manufacturing unit along with the produced bricks can be seen. Also, the nicely brick paved roads can be observed clearly. The bricks are of good quality and can withstand the pressures of everyday use by walkers. They are good even for automobiles. Regularly, institute vehicles ply on the brick paved roads without any damage to the roads. That the quality of the fly ash bricks is superior is quite evident.



The institute roads are paved with bricks produced in the institute workshop at "Sevabrata". The bricks have a nice design and are good enough to withstand everyday load of walkers as well as automobiles.

5 Sudipto Goswami (Instructor), Course: Solar Engineering.



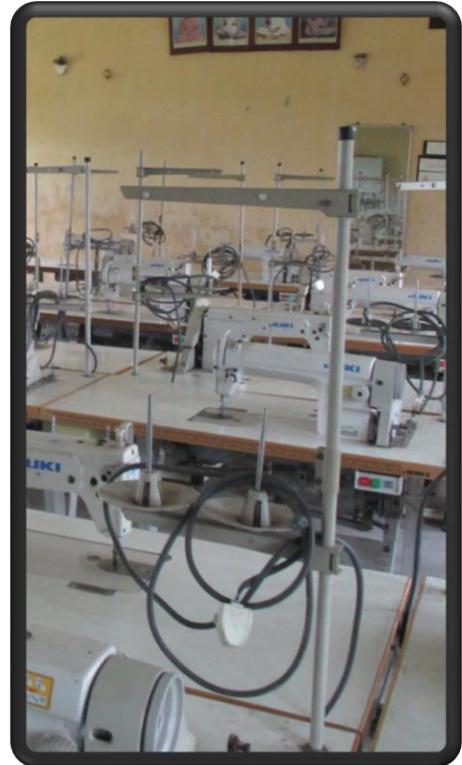
At RKMA, I met Mr. Sudipto Goswami. He is a newly recruited trainer for a course, which will be conducted in RKMA Sargachi from 2017. The course is designed to impart theoretical and practical knowledge on solar power devices to interested students. Mr. Goswami has 20 years of experience in the solar trade. He himself has secured a diploma in Solar Engg., from IETE, New Delhi. The course that he is teaching will constitute 8 students per batch for 3 months, 2 days per week, totaling 200 hours. After the completion of the course, students are expected to gain enough knowledge to join companies or manufacturing businesses. Mr. Goswami

also owns a business. Apart from conducting trainings, in business he deals with solar charge controllers, inverter supplies, off grid panel (500 W – 5 KW) air conditioners etc.

6 Knitting course for girls.

RKMA Sargachi is hosting a knitting course for girl students that have passed 8th, 10th and 12th classes. This training is organized by a Govt. organization called Apparel Training and Design Centre (ATDC). In the next two years, ATDC expects to train around 500 girls on 3 courses viz. apparel production supervision and quality control (APSQC), 6 months, 720 hrs., 100 students per batch, garment construction technique (GCT), 4

months, 25 students per batch, sewing machine technique (SMT), 3 months, 360 hrs., 200 students per batch. During my visit, the training organizers were busy setting up sewing machines to conduct the training. The training space is shown in the picture below.



Ranjit Sinha (Instructor), Course - Video/Photography.

At the RKMA workshop, I met Mr. Sinha, who teaches photography/video and still photography appreciation course to RKMA students. In his class of 20 students per batch he trains students on the technicalities of video and audio editing skills. Each course runs for a period of six months. He himself has a Masters degree in film studies.



Fish Breeding, Hatchery.

At RKMA, fish breeding and fishery training is carried out frequently for the last few years. At the time of my visit, I witnessed a similar training. Training to cultivate three Indian carps, viz. catla (*Catla catla*), rohu (*Labeo rohita*), mrigal (*Cirrhinus mrigala*), grass carp (*Ctenopharyngodon idella*) and silver carp (*Hypophthalmichthys molitrix*) were in progress. Some pictures from fish breeding activities are posted below. RKMA, since 2015 has organized several seminars on fish breeding. They also hosted a few trainings organized by the state Govt.



RKMA has leased a pond outside the campus area in the locality to cultivate Indian carps. Many women in the self help groups (SHG) are getting trained to breed these carps. In addition to carps ornamental fishes are also cultivated. RKMA is currently using its own funds to establish the fish breeding pond for SHG women. Mr. Suprakash Pal, (ex District Fishery Officer, DFO, Govt. of West Bengal), seen in the pictures above is helping RKMA with technology development on this initiative.