



*Asha for Education*TM

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 Parts B & 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: 16th September,

Name of the Project: Digambarpur Angikar- Angikar Kishalay Niketan

Name of the Organisation Running the Project (if different):

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

	Project Contact	You Name (Asha volunteer conducting the visit)
Name	Swapan Kumar Mondal	Priyal Thakur Pratik Agarwal* Utsav Drolia Aishwari Vaidya
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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 35 % (includes water and sanitation, environment protection, disaster R&R) Education 25 % Health 10 %
Other 30 % (please specify) Women empowerment and children right protection

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

The organization has a General Body consisting of 25 members and they are all from the local geographical area. The governing body members and office bearers are elected by the General Body members in the Annual General meeting that is held once a year. The Secretary is the chief functionary. He looks after office/project administration, fund raising, etc.. Responsibilities of the President include supervision of projects and day to day office functioning. He presides over all meetings of the organisation. The treasurer is responsible for finances and all financial transactions on a daily basis. A seat in the General Body is also reserved for a representative from the community/beneficiary as part of the policy making authority.

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)

No other NGOs other than Digambarpur Angikar works in the specified project location. The following government aided schools exist in the general area.

Organization	Objectives of the organization
Radhamohan FP School	Education-from Class I - IV
Digambarpur Nimna Buniyadi FP School	Education-from Class I - IV
Sashikanta SSK from Class I - IV	Education-from Class I-IV

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?

Families from 8 villages with a total population of around 30,000 people.

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

Canning is the gate way of the Sundarban. In the town there are brothels where CSWs do work for livelihood. The target children of CSWs have no access to childhood development. There is none to look after them except mothers and Babu/Mashi. In fact these children are growing in an unhygienic

and indecent environment that ultimately will ruin the future of the children. The CSWs are ill paid due to backward local economy. Their children are not accepted in the public school due to their mother's occupation and social exclusion by the mainstream community.

A tiny suburb in the hinterland of South 24-Parganas, Ghutiari Sharif boasts a mazaar or dargah of Pir Ghazi Mubarak Ali Sahab. People from both Muslim and Hindu communities visit the majar to worship the Ghazi baba. There are mixed community villages surrounding the Ghutiari Sharif. There are also commercial sex workers community close to the holy place. People depend on agriculture and migratory labour work in the Kolkata city and its suburbs.

Mallikpur is a Village in Baruipur Block in 24 Paraganas South District of West Bengal State. Bengali is the Local Language here. Sex work is the profession of livelihood for more than 300 young women in this area. The children of the sex workers are getting attached with the social environment of the area. They neither go to school nor do they have any idea about health and hygiene. Their mothers have little chance to take care of their respective children. The children are all malnourished as their mother fail to give them proper and nutritious food. The income of the mothers is quite low and they are to part with some portion of their income with the maasi and the babus. The children also develop many antisocial habits and learn abuses and rough and slang words. Most of them specially the boy children are offenders. They sometimes are sexually abused. When they grow up many of them also become anti socials, alcoholic and drug addicts. They do not have any alternative better way to live. So even when some of them get some better chance, they fail to adopt this and ultimately return to their own area and lead the same antisocial life. The condition of the girl children is more pathetic. Many of them in their early teens have to accept the same professions as their mothers have.

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

Yes X

No, just the father's name

No, just the mother's name

4. How often do the teachers meet the parents?

Teachers have monthly meetings with the parents. During the COVID crisis teachers have been visiting homes of the students on a regular basis, so parent-teacher interactions have become more frequent.

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 provide admission fees and a fraction of transportation fees. They also participate in parent-teacher meetings.

6. Are there any Government Schools in the area?

yes ✓

No

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

The actual distance is unknown however, we know that the government schools are quite far from their location, which makes enrollment in a government school for the younger children particularly difficult.

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

The school provides quality education and nutritious food. There are monthly meetings between the parents and teachers where teachers track the progress of the students and keep the parents updated. They host cultural events where the students who have passed and scored high results gather together to motivate the junior students. Also, retired teachers come and voluntarily teach subjects.

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

This was a virtual site visit, many children came to the school for the site visit during a time when COVID related lockdown was imposed by the state government and we talked with some of the students. We were told all 210 students at all three centers of GhutiarySharif, Canning and Mallickpur were present but we did not count as it was a difficult thing to do during a virtual meeting with social distancing restrictions in place.

What is the regular class strength?

210 students, 96 girls, 114 boys.

Comments:**10. Do the children seem to enjoy coming to school?**

The children seemed to like coming to school and talked with us about the different activities they enjoyed. One student sang a song for us that she really liked. Other students talked about activities they enjoy and shared with us some of their talents such as poetry and saying hi all together. Overall, the students seemed happy at the school.

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.) X **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?

6th grade

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

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)?

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

6. How many staff or volunteers are recruited from the community?

They have 7 teachers and 2 paid staff. They have no volunteers and all of the staff is paid. All teaching and non teaching staff are from the community.

How many of the staff are women?

When conducting the site visit, 7 of the 9 teaching and non teaching staff were women.

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

Two teachers have left the school in the past one year. One teacher left as he was ill while the other left as she was pregnant.

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

Two new teachers have replaced the previous teachers that have left.

9. Does the organization train the teachers?

Yes

No

If yes, how do they provide the training?

10. How much is the staff paid?

All of the staff is paid.

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

Yes

No

The pay is low compared to the pay in government schools.

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 X No Maybe

Estimates of each item in the list are reasonable but a number of items have to be removed as the children are not attending regular school owing to COVID induced lockdown at this time.

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

Comments: All items are covered in the budget however the budget has to be scaled down to cover only teaching and non teaching staff salaries, educational, medical and hygienic costs for children. Asha-San Francisco also has to evaluate how much of the food related cost it can support.

3. Is there anything you think should be added or removed from the budget?Yes No

All costs outside of salaries of teaching and non teaching staff, educational, medical and hygienic costs for children should be removed from this budget. Some costs related to increasing salaries of staff, making provisions for digital learning and teachers training should be added.

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

At this time, it is difficult to predict when children can return for regular classes, so we have to strengthen the infrastructure for digital learning. It will also be important to improve the quality of learning for children by supplementing the education that they are receiving from their current teachers through some online education.

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

We will discuss the proposed changes in detail with the project.

PART E: Comments

(Feel free to attach documents if necessary)

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, the school has not had a normal teaching environment. The teachers indicated that their main mode of teaching is through WhatsApp and home visits. The students are actively engaged with studying materials. The teachers expressed a need for laptops and printers to assist with learning.

Zoom Recording: Asha SF Virtual Site Visit

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1g_a2ekUByO4hbkVUsd-tLNtbI5qv5vsT/view?usp=sharing

Site Visit Report

Project: Digambarpur Angikar

Type of visit: Virtual via Zoom

Date: 09.16.2021

Time: 10 PM PST/ 10:30 AM IST

Attendance:**Asha San Francisco members:**

- Priyal Thakur
- Pratik Agarwal
- Utsav Drolia
- Aishwari Vaidya

Digambarpur Angikar Members:

- Sourav Sannigrahi (project manager)
- Sulagna Mandal
- Narayan Samanta
- Swapan Kumar Mandal
- Payel Mondal-teacher (Mallickpur)
- Tanuja Khatun -teacher (Mallickpur)
- Sarina Khatun - Aya (Mallickpur)
- Ditiya Kundu-teacher (Canning)
- Priyanka Sa -teacher (Canning)
- Sabita Mondal - Aya (Canning)
- Payel Gayen -teacher (Ghutiary Sharif)
- Sikha Bapari -teacher (Ghutiary Sharif)
- Baishaki Roy -teacher (Ghutiary Sharif)
- Shakila Ghorami -Aya (Ghutiary Sharif)
- Tapas Patra

About:

Digambarpur Angikar, located in the Sundarban, was established in 2000. It is located in a deltatic zone. The organization aims to undertake relief and initiate empowerment of women and children of socioeconomic backgrounds. They are involved in rural action to improve the livelihood status of disadvantaged peoples and host programs to support women and children rights. Along with supporting women and children rights, the organization participates in education and health awareness. They provide access to healthcare to underprivileged communities and provide training on agriculture and the breeding and caring for animals to support the livelihood of these communities. One of the main goals of the organization is to stop discrimination based on caste, creed, sex, clan or color.

Overall Visit :**Canning Center:**

Students are not coming to school as the government has not given permission for that yet. Teachers are doing home visits.

There are a total of 60 students, and a teacher goes to a different house every 3-4 days. The teacher teaches 5 kids at one time, with social distancing protocols. Kids who live close by meet at one place and the teacher visits them. The teacher visits these kids 3 times a week and gives them homework for the other two days. A parent or guardian usually comes to the school to submit and pick up homework. Younger kids are taught Alphabet and older kids are taught word meanings, general knowledge, math, rhymes and art.

The syllabus is based on Government textbooks and is taught based on chapters in the textbook. They teach from government books because eventually, these kids will enroll in local government-run schools. The teachers doing home visits try to involve parents, especially mothers. They try to engage students by sharing small videos on WhatsApp for those who have the facility. The school ensures that students are engaged by home visits, WhatsApp videos, homework, and involving the mothers.

Nisha, a mother of a 3-year-old, has been enrolled in the school for one year now. He is learning Bangla and English languages along with GK and drawing. He has been learning from home for the entire year and the parents are very happy with the school. She mentions that teachers are regular with home visits and giving homework. Her family is having a hard time because of covid since they have no income. They've been getting some help and support from schools like oil, grains, rice, toothbrush, and toothpaste. They'd appreciate more support for their basic needs. Any more food like milk, biscuits, and oil would be valuable to them. Soap was distributed as part of the covid relief fund but more soap would be helpful.

Teachers help kids with their homework. Teachers ask elder siblings and concerned mothers to support their kids with homework. Some mothers are illiterate so they ask neighbors, fathers, or people around to support their kids with homework. Social interaction between kids has been limited. Kids only get to see their friends when a teacher visits. Masks and sanitizers were provided but more would be helpful.

Mallickpur Center

We spoke to Payel, a teacher at the center. The school has 68 students, 3 to 6-year-old kids. 34 males, 34 females. Two teachers, 1 maushi. They have books which were given for the first session. But now it is coming to an end, they might need more books.

They are currently renting a space for the school, but the location is not at all ideal. Mallickpur is the biggest slum area near Kolkata and the center is located in the middle of a swamp. There are issues of waterlogging. There is a lot of water in front of the school making it inconvenient for students and teachers to access. They'd appreciate any help in relocation and buying a new place to run the school. They are not getting any assistance from Municipal authorities, even after

approaching them multiple times. The local authorities gave permission to keep running the school and provided vaccinations for all teachers.

The school had 68 students but few of them left due to the pandemic. Prior to covid, 20 students got admitted to local schools. They can only assess the dropout rate after schools reopen. Parents are encouraging the teachers to come home and teach their kids.

For Mallickpur, their top priority is to find a better place to run their center as it is currently in a swamp and there is water logging all around.

Ghutiary Sharif

Narayana, a teacher at the center:

They are all struggling with food, covid relief, dry food, and sanitizer. There are 99 students, 3 teachers at this center. 41 students left, 41 newly joined. Being the only school in the area, there is community pressure to enroll kids.

85-90 students will come when schools reopen, but it will be tough to educate the huge number of kids with only 3 teachers under a common roof. They need at least 1 more teacher, it'll be better to manage the kids. Right now, they're going home to home.

In terms of the educational qualifications of teachers, they ensure teachers have 10+2 minimum qualifications. One teacher was in a tuition job before she was hired. They prefer to hire from the locality. It's hard to find highly qualified teachers from a minority community. They can manage to hire one more teacher from the community if approval is given.

They charge nominal fees of Rs. 25 per kid at the time of registration. There are no monthly fees. The teachers are of the strong opinion that a laptop and projector would be helpful for online classes. They intend to use that for projection mainly. Teachers are trained and know how to use a laptop. Getting additional tables, benches and other standard things would also be helpful. They'd also like to get some dry food and drinking water every week if possible.

Exchange with Students:

We spoke with several students. We asked the students about school and they said they liked it. Many students said they like dancing, drawing, and singing as hobbies. A student recited a poem for us and some students also sang for us.

Summary:

Due to covid, kids have been missing out on social interaction. They're getting closer to their teacher during home visits as that is the only platform where students meet. They love to talk much more with teachers and students. Some kids feel reluctant and aggressive too, they'd like to relax, play, talk to other kids their age. They are not receiving funding from anywhere else. They were provided with a few 50 bottles of sanitizers and some masks, but it was not enough for everyone.

The kids are learning mainly Bengali, math, English, general science with the medium of teaching being in Bengali.

Teachers are traveling to the students' houses via bicycle, tricycle, motor van, or by walking.

They don't face difficulty in reaching the houses since they live close by and they have created a small internal mapping among them.