Navjyothi (NJSS)

Yearly Update for the year 2021-2022
July 2022
Important Documents for Annual Review

• Yearly Progress Report: TBD
• Latest Site Visit by Akshay Bhole, Asha Boston volunteer (24\textsuperscript{th} Dec 2021) : **NJSS Site Visit Report - Dec 2021**
• Half Yearly Report:  **Progress Report for Apr-Sep 2021**

• Budget for current year: **NJSS Budget for year Apr 2022 - Mar 2023**
• Fund Utilization Report has been received from Deen Dayalji, but some clarifications are required
Background of Navjyothi (NJSS)

• This project is located in rural areas near the city of Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh

• The area is famous for the Banarasi sari weaving industry. Most of the weavers are illiterate and very poor and most children in the area worked with their families in the local sari weaving industry

• Nandlalji started teaching kids from the neighborhood in 1994 and that is why he is called Nandlal Master or Masterji.

• He first started teaching with an informal teaching center in the evening with four children from Nagepur village. This inspired other youth in the neighboring villages to start teaching children in their villages. This effort over the years ramped up to support 10 such schools – 2 day schools and 8 night schools, without any outside support. These centers have now stopped and children have been integrated into ASV school or government schools nearby

• Three major initiatives are run by Navjyothi – Asha Samajik Vidyalaya, Kishori Kendras and Self-Help Groups with Austin supporting the first two initiatives
Asha Samajik Vidyalaya

• Asha Chicago first started supporting the Asha Samajik Vidyalaya in 1999
• This is a regular day school, and it is located on land that was donated by Nandlalji to Asha Trust
• The school has been registered officially under the Right to Education Act
  • School building with library and computer room
  • Separate toilets for boys and girls
• There were 253 students in the last academic year from LKG to Class 8
• Various School Functions are celebrated like Independence Day, Republic Day, Gandhi Jayanti, Children's Day and other religious & social events
• Children are taught about issues relating to Gender, Human Rights, Child Rights, Domestic Violence & other social issues
ASV School Updates (1)

- During the COVID shutdowns, the teachers helped in distributing masks and medicines through the health centers in their respective villages
  - Teachers were awarded the Corona Warrior Award for their selfless service
  - As part of the Corona Relief campaign, all 253 children received nutrition kits and sanitization kits

- Children were called in groups to the school and imparted education and given homework for three days at a time

- Started online school in collaboration with CLE Trust (group of people from IIM Bangalore) in July of 2021
  - Students from 6th, 7th and 8th grades were taught Maths, English and Science
  - Students arrived at the centers and attended class through Zoom calls (those who did not internet access)
    - Good opportunity to introduce technology in the rural areas
    - Good feedback about the education methods from Apna Ghar (project in Kanpur run by Asha Fellow Maheshji)
    - Good opportunity for teachers to learn along with the students
    - Government was only allowing online school
ASV School Updates (2)

• Celebrated Independence Day with all the children and distributed sweets (jalebi) among the children. Also celebrated Teachers Day and Children’s Day

• Regular school started close to October/November
  • It has been challenging to get the children adjusted to school again after the long gap
  • Play has become a priority among children, and parents have been unsure about the lockdowns or safety of letting children start schools
  • About 15-20 children are reduced this year compared to last year – some moved to other schools and some have dropped out. Efforts are being made to try to bring back such children

• Rural schools have been heavily impacted due to the COVID shutdowns and it will take a while for things to recover from all this change

• Teachers did their best to catch up on the syllabus and must have covered about 70-80% of the syllabus for the grade.
Distribution of stationery and nutrition kits among children from ASV
Online learning during COVID

Distribution of socks and shoes to children
Kishori Shiksha Kendra

• Kishori Shiksha Kendra or Kishori Sewing Center is a program which targets adolescent girls who have never been to school and some who are recently married.

• Provides them with basic education, health camps, training in sewing & embroidery, awareness about their rights and other ways to empower them.

• They organize a summer camp for girls where they provide training for computer work, handicrafts, beautician, martial arts, dance, painting, scooter or bike driving.

• NJSS is currently running 16 sewing centers with Asha Austin supporting 10 sewing centers with around ~200-250 teenage girls attending.
Kishori Kendra Updates

• Last year the Kishori Kendras were stopped during the peak of the second wave, but afterwards the centers were reopened with COVID safety protocols

• About 25,000 masks were made by all the Kishori Kendra centers

• All the adolescent girls (~350) were provided with a nutrition kit including - gram, almonds, chavanprash, jaggery etc and a health kit including masks, panties, shampoo, soap, washing powder and sanitary pads.

• Health has become a major focus since the start of the pandemic. Working on creating awareness about hygiene among women and girls. Feel like this initiative has made a big difference in their lives
  • Provided the girls with information about women’s health and especially around menstruation
  • Distributed sanitary pads to the girls and women (380 women)
  • Working to remove the stigma around menstruation by having the men of the family (fathers, brothers and husbands) participate in these informational programs and also in the distribution of the sanitary pads

• Organized the summer camp 10 May to 10 June 2022

• Girls went on an educational tour to Sitamadi, Vindhyachal, Swarved Mandir, Sarnath and Lalpur Museum
Kishori Kendra
Summer Camp
Visit to police station as part of summer camp

Certificates given at end of Summer Camp

Program at conclusion of summer camp
Education trip for the girls of the Kishori Kendras

Opening of new sewing center
Women Self Help Groups (SHG)

- Women traditionally do not have much rights – whether it is the household or the community. The objective of SHG is to organize the women into groups so that they can deal with issues common to them.

- There are about 216 women self-help groups running with a strength of more than 5000 women.

- Every month the money from groups is being deposited and women are trading among themselves as per their need. The saving of all the groups collectively is close to 22 lakh rupees.

- Training of group operations was given to the leaders of these groups.

- In order to empower women in these groups, training programs were organized on issues such as violence against women, women’s rights, their participation in Panchayat, and participated in various events organized by them.
SHG Updates (1)

- Sanitary pads, masks and sanitizers were distributed to all the women (~4000)
- COVID vaccine was administered to about 800 women
- Distribution of dry ration to 4000 families under Corona Relief Campaign was done
- Mask fabricated by the women from the sewing centers were distributed under the supervision of SHG group
- Street plays were conducted to raise awareness on various issues
Women associated with the SHG helped in the distribution of sanitary pads to 3200 women

Campaign organized to end violence against women (Nov 25 – Dec 15)

Washing Power Initiative is going on
- Need to continue to work on marketing the product
- Demand is not very regular, so the income stream is not regular
- Still been a good initiative and has been profitable and good learning experience
- 80 quintals of washing powder was made and distributed as part of the health kits for COVID
Campaign to end violence against women
Awareness about menstruation

Distribution of sanitary pads amongst women and girls of the villages
Library

- Every Sunday from 10 am to 2pm the children can come and collect books
- About 360 children are members
- Masks were distributed to all children
- Needy children were given books and stationery to help them with their studies
- Career workshop was organized by BHU students
COVID Relief Work

• 1500 bags of rations were distributed amongst the disabled, sick, needy and unsupported people. Ration kit included rice, dal, wheat flour, soya-beans, salt, turmeric, coriander, sugar, oil, biscuits, etc

• In addition, 500 ration kits were distributed to people who affected by floods

• 4000 nutrition kits and sanitization kits were distributed amongst the union workers and daily laborers. Nutrition kit contained – dal, oil, sugar, almonds, jaggery, soyabeans, salt, etc and Sanitization kit contains – mask, sanitizer, sanitary pads, soaps, shampoo, washing powder

• Health camps were organized in Nagepur, and 1650 people were vaccinated and 1250 people were tested for COVID

• From the Primary Health Center in Nagepur, about 4500 people have been seen and treated since the start of COVID

• With the help of the Mobile Van Ambulance, health camps were organized in 48 places and 2500 people were examined and received medicines

• 4 COVID help desks were established in different villages and 3500 people were evaluated and given medicines

• In 20 villages, primary health clinics were established, where 80 youth were given training regarding primary health and given health kits, so that they could help those in need

• Mobile Ambulance Van helped transport 18 patients who needed to be admitted to hospitals

• Oxygen concentrators were taken to the homes of 15 patients who needed really needed oxygen
COVID Wave 2 Relief

- Under the COVID Wave 2 - Relief and Rehabilitation efforts by Asha, Navjyothi received
  - Rs 3.8 lakhs from Asha Central to provide medical relief
  - Rs 3.8 lakhs from Asha Austin to provide food and relief to children associated with the school and the girls from the Kishori Kendra
COVID Relief Work

Mobile Ambulance

Ration kits distribution among the handicapped
COVID Awareness through posters and street plays

Use of oxygen concentrators for patients
Links to videos and articles

• https://youtu.be/X0eQwobdTVI (Awareness about elections)
• https://youtu.be/U_RFYbmltwg (Mobile Health Camp)
• https://youtu.be/8HzjUn_F_aY (Washing Powder Initiative)
Fund Utilization Report

• Asha approved amounts
  • Rs 15,66,200 towards ASV (General Funds - Rs 8,30,600) and KSK (Austin – Rs 7,35,600)
  • Rs 5,43,000 towards Construction (Austin)
  • Total: 21,09,200

• FUR shows Rs 24,08,000 as reported income (seeking clarification on same)
• KSK – includes salaries for 16 centers (some of which are supported by AID)
  • Cost for supporting extra teachers from 6 centers is Rs 2,16,000 + misc. expenses from that category
  • ASV expenses were Rs 9,70,000 and KSK expenses were Rs 7,50,000 (after deducting Rs 2,16,000) looks very similar to the budgets. Local fundraising has been lower last year as most support effort has gone into COVID

• Asha COVID relief support
  • Asha Austin supported Rs 3,80,000 (https://ashadocserver.s3.amazonaws.com/124_NJSS_COVID_Relief_Proposal_26May2021.pdf)
  • Asha General Funds supported Rs 3,76,000 (https://ashadocserver.s3.amazonaws.com/124_AshaRajatalab_Proposal_May7_2021.pdf)
Construction Updates

• The Asha Community Center underwent some construction in the last year on the second floor and third floor
• Walls and roof were completed
• Remaining work includes plastering, windows and doors, wiring and bathroom requires painting and floor tiling work

• When worked started with the contractors, they were told that it did not make sense to do the roofing work in batches. Thus it was decided to complete the roofing work at the same time.
• Roof was created for 4-5 rooms and thus rest of the completion work got delayed. Rs 2-3 lakhs were used from NJSS general funds to get the roofing done
• Based on the budget submitted by Nandlalji, they have about Rs 12,00,000 construction still to be completed
Questions