

Project objective: To ensure not only education but also the quality of education for the children in Asha Samajik Vidyalaya

Working organization: Navjyoti and Lok Samiti

Address: Village: Nagepur, P.O.:Benipur, District: Varanasi

Constitutional Organization: Asha Trust

Office address: Village and PO: Bhandha Kala Kaithi Varanasi, U.P.

Program coordinator: Nandlal Master

Phone number: +91-9415300520 (cell)

Program implementation site: Asha Samajik Vidyalaya, Nagepur and Harsos.

Program background:

Since 1994, NJSS has been providing free child education and public awareness amongst the Banarasi sari weaver community in 10 villages of Varanasi since 1994. The education scenario in these villages was very pathetic at that time. Most of the children in this community used to work as child laborers in the sari weaving industry in stead of going to school. The organization inaugurated its informal center in 1994. The Asha Chicago Chapter has been supporting all the centers under this organization since 2001. This helped the organization to reach many of its goals.

On villagers' request, we established a permanent center-Asha Samajik Vidyalaya, at Nagepur center in 2003 and another center at Harsos in 2004. Children in both of these centers get primary education according to the syllabus devised by the matriculate education board of Uttar Pradesh. Currently, about 400 children are getting full-time education in these two centers through 12 teachers. Besides the above mentioned schools, we have also opened 8 training and education centers for adolescent girls (*Kishori Kendra*). About 200 girls are being trained in vocational skills such as sewing and embroidery in these *Kishori kendras*.

Having run these two educational centers for about four years, the organization has realized that it is not enough to impart just bookish knowledge. It has become increasingly important to provide these children with education through latest technology in a qualitative context. In line with this idea, we have been sending our teachers to training sessions for mastering techniques of teaching quality education. We also

introduced computer-based education in our central education center at Nagepur. Besides, we also opened library facilities at both the centers. Each library has over 1000 books related to their curriculum as well as reference books. We also bought learning kits from Poovidum Trust, Bangalore for use in both the centers. Making these changes in our teaching methods showed two clear results-first, teaching became more effective and second, imparting and receiving education became an interesting experience for teachers and students respectively.

Still, we feel that there is room for improvement in terms of the quality of our education. This is because our students are still not at par with other private and convent school students especially in English, Mathematics and Science. So, we would like to continue with our emphasis on the quality of education in our educational centers. It would be helpful for us to focus on this by creating a separate program dedicated to quality of education.

Program goals:

- Ensure quality education to students
- Impart fun-filled/activity based learning
- Increase teaching skills of teachers
- Emphasize on Mathematics, English, Science and computer-based learning
- Expose students to general knowledge and also knowledge about new technologies outside the class curriculum

Strengths to start the program:

Asha has its own community center where educational and training facilities such as computer, library, learning kits and other educational tools are available. A work force of about 30 experienced permanent teachers and staff members would help us in achieving these goals. Moreover, our work is not restricted to this organization but we also collaborate with other educational networks.

| Program | Objective | Methods | Results expected |
|----------------------------------|--|---|---|
| <i>Teachers training program</i> | To increase teaching skills and efficiency | Getting the teachers trained at either Eklavya Education Foundation, Bhopal or at Jodo Gyaan, Delhi for five days | This would increase teacher's ability to impart effective education and implementation of new methods of teaching in our centers. |
| <i>Exposure visits</i> | To increase teachers' experience | Arrange exposure visits of teachers to other learning centers | To learn how effective and quality education is delivered in other institutes |
| <i>Coaching</i> | To enhance teachers' skills in | Encouraging teachers to polish their skills by joining English and | Teachers will gain deep understanding of their subjects which would help them teach their |

Neena Majumdar 1/31/11 11:12 PM
Comment: .1. NGO/project objective

Neena Majumdar 1/31/11 11:12 PM
Comment: 1. NGO/project objective

Neena Majumdar 1/31/11 11:12 PM
Comment: 2a. What 'quality of education' issue is the proposal addressing?

Neena Majumdar 1/31/11 11:13 PM
Comment: 2a. How does the proposal address the issue?

Neena Majumdar 2/1/11 12:02 AM
Comment: 2b. How do you define 'success' for the proposed initiative?

2c. How does the proposal address requirements/concerns/interests of (a) children (b) teachers

| | | | |
|---|---|---|--|
| | English language and computer usage | computer coaching centers during holidays and weekends. | students in a better way |
| <i>Learning kits and other learning tools' resource</i> | To ensure quality of education to our students | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Making the students practice through textbooks from Eklavya Education Foundation, Bhopal. 2. Create a resource of study tools and Math puzzles from Jodo Gyaan, Delhi. 3. To develop and implement a new curriculum for English learning in both the centers | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The textbooks from Eklavya Education Foundation are activity-based and innovative which draw interest of the child towards learning. If the child practices himself/herself it would also increase his/her confidence in that subject. 2. Little children can learn basic Math concepts through a playway method. This will again make the children inquisitive to learn more. 3. Children can polish their English speaking, reading and writing skills. This will boost their confidence and open doors for global and modern education for them. |
| <i>Science laboratory in Nagepur center</i> | To allow the children to perform simple science experiments along with learning theoretical concepts. | Perimeter lens, Measuring instruments such as weighing machine/scale, air pressure measurement, chemistry lab related instruments | Students can have practical as well as theoretical knowledge. It would strengthen their understanding of Science by performing simple experiments on their own. They will know how simple machines and instruments work such as lenses, prisms etc. This will create a general curiosity towards science amongst the students. |
| <i>Library expansion</i> | To increase students' knowledge beyond textbooks and thus increase their confidence. | Dictionary, Children's magazines, General knowledge books, Storybooks, poetry books, educational CD's, audio cassettes, video games and other books related to their subjects. | Students can make use of their time by developing reading habits, especially on days when the teacher is on leave. This is also a good mechanism to increase their knowledge in their study subjects as well as general knowledge. Children who generally do not enjoy reading can benefit by using |

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| | | | <p>other mediums such as, CD's and audio devices. Overall this is going to expand their outlook and in turn boost their self-confidence.</p> |
|--|--|--|--|

2c. Contribution to the community: Focusing on the quality of education will certainly address the interests/requirements of the community here in two ways. First, the Banarasi sari weaving community have faced a setback in the last few decades due to low market demand of Banarasi silk. Due to lack of any other skills or education, numerous weavers have either become unemployed or they are doing manual labor work to earn a livelihood. Improving the quality of education in the current generation of this community will open the doors of numerous other skilled jobs. Second, we hope that these children gaining a scientific and broader outlook can improvise and also revive the Banarasi silk industry with their ideas and knowledge about technological advances. This will be a huge contribution to the community through quality education.

Neena Majumdar 2/1/11 12:03 AM

Comment: 2c. How does the proposal address requirements/concerns/interests of (c) parents (d) community?

Contribution to guardians' interest: We have observed that the guardians of our students share a common interest in improving the learning experience and efficacy of their children. The homework given to our students can be easily completed by the students without any external help. This lightens the workload and stress on the part of the parents trying to keep up with the child's progress after the school hours.

Evaluation of progress

Neena Majumdar 1/31/11 11:13 PM

Comment: 2b. How will you measure the effectiveness of the proposed initiative?

- Giving them monthly exams
- Assessing their progress reports
- Observing any improvement in their interest towards learning
- Observing interaction and communication of the child with his/her teacher and fellows, such as asking questions in the class, and participating in class discussions.
- Monitoring any increase in their self-confidence and leadership qualities
- Organizing interschool competitions and knowing where our students stand as compared to other school students.
- Regular checking of the student's completion and quality of the homework.
- Observing teachers while they teach and also their interaction with the students.

Expectations from partner Asha Chapter

- To provide necessary funds to commence this program
- Regular correspondence and discussion with the teachers and exchange of ideas on teaching.
- Site visits by few Asha volunteers meeting with the students and teachers
- If possible, to introduce us to new methods of quality education and help us build connections with organizations which are employing better methods.

- To evaluate the progress of this program on a regular basis.

Budget for a year

Neena Majumdar 1/31/11 11:13 PM

Comment: 3. Budget

| S.No. | Program | Details of expenditure | Total cost in Rupees |
|-------|-------------------------------|---|----------------------|
| 1. | Teachers' training | Conveyance expenses, meals, teaching tools, honorarium | 15,000.00 |
| 2. | Teachers' coaching | Three months coaching fee for 5 teachers | 5000.00 |
| 3. | Learning kits and study tools | Textbooks from Eklavya Education Foundation and Math tools and puzzles from Jodo Gyaan and buying books according to new syllabus for English in both the centers | 15,000.00 |
| 4. | Science laboratory | Equipments such as lenses and measuring devices | 10,000.00 |
| 5. | Library Expansion | Dictionary, Children's' magazines, story books, CD's, audio cassettes, reference books, general knowledge books. | 10,000.00 |
| | | Total Budget | 55,000.00 |
| | | Fifty five thousand rupees only | |

Part B: Information to be filled by Asha chapter that is recommending this proposal to be funded.

1. Meeting minutes for discussion of the proposal. (please include chapter comments on project's response to QED questionnaire: such as aspects of quality that project is already addressing well, and those that can be improved)

Meeting minutes (1/29/2011) – Asha Chicago: Chandan Dasgupta, Neena Majumdar, Preeti Gupta, Unmesh Jadhav, Tara Pai

Navjyoti is trying to initiate a teacher training program under this QED proposal. It also plans to procure/construct teaching aids in collaboration with other NGO's to promote hands-on learning along with setting up a library with good reference books that compliment these teaching aids. Key points raised in this meeting –

- Who will train the teachers?
 - (update on 2/13/2011) This issue has been addressed now after talking to the project partner. Navjyoti plans to collaborate with Eklavya Foundation and Jodo Gyan for the teacher training.
- How do we evaluate the success empirically?
 - (update on 2/13/2011) This is still under works and we are collaborating with Navjyoti to define an evaluation metric. It was felt that the progress report cards would give an idea of the success but a lot would also depend on qualitative measures like teacher observation and interaction with the students.

Overall, there's merit in the proposal and we feel that the project would benefit from this initiative. It was decided that we would approach another Asha chapter with this proposal since we were considering submitting the proposal from Gramya.

Meeting minutes (2/13/2011) – Asha Athens: Puja, Saranya, Farzin, Neena, Chandan

Neena briefly described what Navjoti does and gave an overview of the proposal – under this proposal, Navjyoti wants to initiate a teacher training program along with procuring teaching aids for the children. The attendees raised no objection and felt that the project has merit.

2. What is your view on success of the proposed initiative? How will the chapter evaluate the effectiveness? If successful, is your chapter willing to fund this initiative after 2 years?

Success in this case would mean a growth in the student's confidence and better inter-personal communication skill. We would also evaluate success by observing the change in academic progress of the student. We are working with the project to develop an evaluation metric. The chapter is willing to fund the initiative beyond the stipulated 2 years

3. Do you intend to continue funding the project for next 2 years? Can a site visit be arranged between June 2011 and Dec 2011?

Yes. We'll organize the site visit.

4. How is this proposal different from other proposals? (in case your chapter received more than 1 proposal for this grant)

The other proposal was received from Gramya project. It was concerning a similar teacher training and teaching aid procurement initiative. Navjyoti was referred to Asha Athens who are now submitting the proposal after having a discussion amongst themselves.