

Asha for Education™

Site Visit Questionnaire

Asha Zurich • Weidmannstrasse 14 • 8046 Zurich

www.asha-zurich.ch

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: 12.11.2018

Name of the Project: Naba Diganta

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

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	Montu Mondal	Somil Miglani
Address	c/o Sabuj Sangha, New Alipurduar, West Bengal <u>Head Office:</u> Nandakumarpur, South 24 Parganas, 743349 West Bengal	
Phone(s)	08348587501	+41 775 230 281
Fax		
E-mail	arunabha@sabujsangha.org	miglani.somil@gmail.com

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 ____% Education ____% Health ____%
Other ____% (please specify) _____

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

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

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? Most families of the kids live within 1.5-2 kms of the site Uttar Narathali and within 5km from the site Turturikhanda.

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

The most common economic activity in the region is gathering and selling of firewood. Some people are involved in small scale farming activities and others sell dairy from their privately owned cattle.

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?

Both the sites are a part of a close-knit community. The parents and teachers know each other very well. Some of the parents live very close to the site and even dropped in to see what was happening during the visit. Generally, the parents are made aware of the students' attendance especially if it is dropping. The teachers are often in touch with them to keep their motivation to send their kids to such centers high.

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.)

The parents' contribution to the organization's activities seems minimal. They are in consistent touch with the teachers to make sure their kids are performing well. The parents also contribute monetarily to buy certain books and study materials for their kids, especially the ones not provided by the school.

6. Are there any Government Schools in the area? YES

7. If yes, how far are the Government Schools from the community? The site Turturikhanda is within the building of a govt. school itself. The site Uttar Narathali is within 5km from the nearest govt. school.

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

Both sites act as learning centers additional to formal schooling. Most kids attend both the organization's centers and govt. school.

9. When you visited, how many children were present in the class? Close to full strength

What is the regular class strength? Uttar Narathali: 60 Turturikhanda: 90

Comments:

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

The children seem to enjoy and appreciate the value that these learning centers bring. Some relatively elder students like the attention they receive from the teachers, which they lack in govt. schools. They also appreciate the regularity in classes and the helping nature of the teachers, which they report is absent from in their respective govt. schools. Breakfast and sport activities seem to be the motivating factors for a lot of kids.

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.) ☐

B. Non-Formal Education (NFE) ☒

C. Vocational ☐

D. Other ☐. Please specify _____

till what class? Commonly until 8-10th
do the students also attend formal school?

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

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

Most of the children attend formal schools.

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)?

The teachers are responsible for creating the study material in addition to books that some of them receive from organization and govt. schools.

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

**6. How many students are currently enrolled?
past 12 months?**

How many new students were enrolled in the

7. How many students left in the past 12 month, and why?

Very few students 4-5 left school in the last months. The main reasons parents requiring them to fetch stones and firewood to help them. The kids can earn a decent amount of money by indulging in such activities. Therefore, parents are disincentivized t

8. How many school days were missed in the past 6 months by all students?

For the site Uttar Narathali there were a considerable amount of students who missed classes. Main reasons were adverse weather conditions (the region has intense hail and rainstorms) and menstruation for some maturing girls.

9. How many days was the school open in the past 6 months?

Except for a few days when the weather did not permit, the school was mostly open.

10. How many staff or volunteers are recruited from the community? 3 and 4 respectively in Uttar Narathali and Tutturikhanda

How many of the staff are women? 3

11. How many teachers are there in total? 7 ***How many new teachers have joined in the past 12 months?*** 1-2

12. How many teachers have left the school in the past 12 months, and why?

None

13. How many days did the teachers miss work in the past 3 months?

None

14. Does the organization train the teachers?

NO

If yes, how do they provide the training?

15. Does each child have their own books? How many books does a child have on average?

YES, most kids have their own books. Their respective govt. schools provide some, some are provided by the organization and others are self-bought.

16. Does each child have their own school uniform? Are there enough school uniforms for all children?

YES

17. How much is the staff paid? 4500 Rupees/month

Is it on par with the salary paid to the staff in the Government schools? NO

(Please have a look at the accounting books of the organization and answer the following questions)

18. Have the teacher salaries in the last 6 months been paid on time? YES

PART D: Financial resources of the organization

(Feedback from the person conducting the site visit – you may again request the accounting books/ overview of Operating Expenses (OPEX))

1. Is there a deviation between the OPEX and our approved budget? YES, Part of the allocated budget is unspent.

Are all items covered in the budget?

If yes, what is the deviation (list per item)? See attached document

2. Do you think the proposed amounts in the budget are reasonable? MAYBE

Most of the items in the budget seem to be reasonable. However, there are some items like sport materials that seem excessive. Furthermore, the ground reality seems to be that most of the allocated budget in this category is unspent. The kids complained of lack of qualitative sport equipment. The currently available equipment is highly incommensurate with the seemingly high value of the total expenses for this category.

Based on my interaction with the teaching staff, their salaries are lower than the govt. salaries for equivalent positions. For this reason, some of the teaching staff revealed that they are looking for positions in govt. schools. It would be ideal if the budget allocation for this category can be increased to keep the motivation of the teaching staff.

The project coordinator mentioned that the allocated budget for benches and cabinets is unspent. In one of the two sites (Turikhanda) benches already present in the classrooms from the govt. school where this center is located was being used. In the other center, some kids had to sit on the floor and there was an urgent need for benches. There is also a need for storage space for both centers to securely keep any study/sport materials.

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

YES

Based on my assessment of both the centers and the demands of the teachers and students, I feel there are certain needs of the kids that are unaddressed in the budget. Some of the needs are listed below.

1. **Transport/equipment for monsoon season (Covered rickshaw):** Some younger kids were demanding bicycles, which are relatively more expensive. The relatively older kids already own cycles provided by their govt. schools. A manually pulled covered rickshaw to transport the younger kids was discussed with the organization as a plausible solution. In addition, the kids could benefit from the availability of umbrellas, raincoats etc.
2. **Toilets:** Currently there are no toilets in Uttar Narathali. The kids and staff are reliant on the kindness of the neighbors to use their toilets.
3. **Sport equipment:** As mentioned earlier the expenses on sport equipment do not represent the available collection of equipment. The kids have diverse interests such as badminton, football, tennis, table tennis, etc. I believe within the currently allocated budget, it is easily possible to cover a large array of sports.
4. **Music equipment:** The teachers organize festivals and other cultural activities. They could greatly benefit from some music system. A lot of the kids displayed really good dancing skills, which they acquired all on their own. Some girls were performing on Bollywood songs, and some boys to our surprise were B-boying and performing hip-hop. A music system will help them put energy into these skills and develop their personalities outside of study.
5. **Extracurricular staff:** It was concluded that the kids receive good quality academic assistance from the centers, which is finally completed in the govt. schools. However, there is a lack of teaching assistance in extra-curricular activities such as arts, culture, sport etc.
6. **Infrastructure:** The centers especially Uttar Narathali, can benefit from infrastructure such as lights, storage space, and a better building. The current building is built with tin and gets very hot/cold. The room was very dark and some lighting is important. Storage space is important for securely storing the assets that these centers own.
7. **Teacher training:** I think the teaching staff can greatly benefit from training to further improve their professional skills and knowledge. They are currently operating in isolation and bringing them in contact with other educational associations could help. A starting point would be reference materials for teachers to teach from.
8. **Vocational training:** This idea was also discussed with the organization. Kids who display interest and inclination to specific vocational skills can be given support to develop them further. There were kids who apparently were very good at sewing etc., which they learned from their parents. They could earn livelihood if they were given a chance to improve. The organization has several other projects that deal with such activities, and some exchange is possible.

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.

The above-mentioned ideas have all been discussed with the representatives of the project. Considering that there are limited resources available at hand, it was decided the prioritization of the needs is of utmost important. The project coordinators promised that their next budget will reflect the most important and pressing needs and will include the necessary detail.

PART E: Comments

(Feel free to attach documents if necessary)