

Nirmaan Site Visit Report

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I visited Nirmaan project based in Hyderabad on 4th of November 2017 with my parents. It was located in the basement of a house. We visited there during normal working hours and got a chance to meet Mr. Chandra Shekhar, who is the founder director of Nirmaan and several people who work on delivering the workshops and Vidya Helpline (VHL) as well.

Since most of Nirmaan's work is done with surrounding schools, there was only one student at their office who had come down to talk to the counsellors and study. He shared the story of how he is from a disadvantaged background and told us that being in touch with Nirmaan made a huge difference to his admission in a degree program. He also told that Nirmaan helped him secure a scholarship for continuing his studies.

Although we interacted with just one student, Chandra and others shared several stories of how students have benefitted in the past with the help of their helpline and workshops. One story in particular that caught our attention goes as follows- When I asked them about the number of times any student has called them on the helpline number, they said that there was one particular student who called around 200 times on the Helpline number. That was very surprising to us as no single student could have so many doubts with the process of application. Upon digging further, they realized that the student was from a very remote village in AP. He was one of the role models in the village for having joined a degree program with scholarship and was quite famous. He would frequently be visited by his friends and juniors for consultation and he would help every one of them by calling up VHL and asking for doubts on their behalf. This was a very motivating story for the Nirmaan workers and inspired them to continue doing their work.

They also shared how they collect data on the VHL calls and workshops and analyzed it every month to make their operations most impactful. Some of the choices they deliberately made while doing the workshops were

1. Conducting them in remote areas where it was difficult for children to get information by any other means
2. Making the 3 visits for 1 day each over a period of 2 months instead of consecutive days that helped them get more calls and retention of children
3. Following up with the brightest kids/ kids who show initial interest in using their services

One of the ground volunteers who takes these workshops in schools also talked to us and gave us a demo of the workshop. Apart from this we also asked them for a demo of how the operator of VHL take calls and help with queries ranging from college admission to receiving scholarship. They also shared material they use in workshops such as the Career Chart and Career Booklet. They emphasized that the workshops were conducted in local language for them to be most beneficial to the students. Few pictures from the visit:



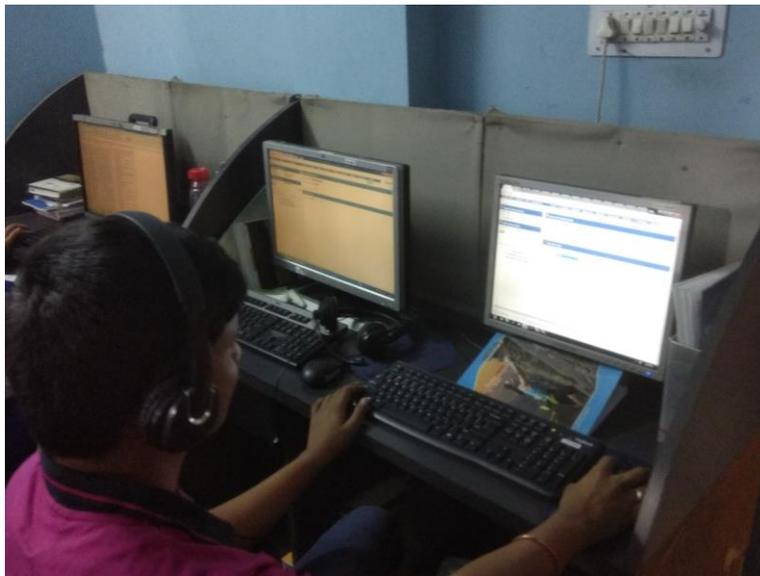
Interaction with Chandra Shekhar, Founding Director of Nirmaan



Chandu Anna with the study material



Nirmaan's Resource people who conduct the workshops and collect information about admissions, scholarships, etc.



A VHL Operator during call with a student



Nirmaan team with us and the career chart In the background