

# Site Visit Report

I visited the Hariksha Learning Centre (HLC), established for children with cerebral palsy and mental retardation, on September 16, 2019. The centre is located at Avalurpet, a village about 30 kms from Thiruvannamalai, Tamil Nadu. The project has been initially supported by multiple chapters of Asha - Seattle, Irvine, Los Angeles, and Danbury - <https://ashanet.org/project/?pid=973>

Funding was stopped in 2016 and Asha Chennai started supporting the project from 2017. Asha Chennai was directly paying the salaries of the following staff:

1. Special Educator - Mr. Ramesh and Ms. Sujatha - Ms. Sujatha also happens to be one of the trustees and is the wife of the managing trustee, Mr. Ravi.
2. Assistant Special Educator - Ms. Atishwari
3. Therapist - Mr. Gandhi
4. Caretakers - Ms. Shanthi and Ms. Kamakshi
5. Van driver
6. Cook

Hariksha Learning Centre is part of the Hariksha Trust which also runs a home for mentally retarded adult woman and was also involved in running two orphanages which were closed a year back. The home for mentally retarded woman is supported by the Government of Tamil Nadu.

## Hariksha Learning Centre

The centre currently has about 35-40 children, mostly from the surrounding villages. They mostly belong to families of landless and migrant labourers. Children attend classes between 10:00 AM and 3:30 PM and are divided into three classes - pre-primary, primary, and vocational training.

Children are selected based on the list provided by the volunteers of Sarva Shiksha Abhayan (SSA). Most of the students have never undergone mainstream education. Special educators prepare the preliminary reports and work on goal setting for each student. In some cases, parents have to be oriented about the disability and students were reduced from their homes where they are neglected. Support from other Government schemes are also solicited and obtained.

Contributions from parents are very minimal. The centre relies on support from donations and in-kind support from well wishers. As mentioned earlier, Asha Chennai funds the salaries of staff and Asha Bangalore has recently provided a one time grant to the extent of Rs. 3,00,000 to cover the expenses of transport and food.

## **Challenges Ahead:**

### **1. FCRA Renewal**

Hariksha Trust earlier had a FCRA licence and was subsequently not renewed. This caused a dent in their funding leading to the closure of the orphanage facility. Following the closure of the orphanage, the staff and children from the organisation have been placed. Since many other NGOs in Tamil Nadu are facing similar issues, it is not clear as to when the issue will be sorted out.

### **2. Future expansion:**

HLC operates in own premises which looks adequate for the current children. It is not clear if they can expand their operations with the limited space, while there is always a possibility of another centre. There is no place available for creating a play area for children.

### **3. Ability to get staff:**

Given the remoteness of location, HLC is unable to replace their staff due to attrition.

## **Asha Metrics**

### **1. Please describe the type of special need**

Cerebrally Palsied & Mentally Retarded Children

### **2. Please describe the type of service provided for the children**

- Learning Centre is provided with the Professional trainers (Spl education, Physiotherapy)
- This centre will ensure the Children's Rights and Friendly atmosphere
- Providing easy adoptive mobility equipment's ( Caliper, wheel chair, Carnot chair, walker, Splints, ect..)
- Proper Medical Care, medicine
- Providing one time food (meals), Snacks, Health Drink
- Two Sets of Uniform, Shoes / Slippers
- Identification the children's interests filed
- Integrated to normal school
- Vocation training for the Adult MR children
- Physiotherapy training to the parents
- Create awareness to parents and communities

### **3. Students supported**

- Number of all students = 45 children
- Number of girls = 31 Children
- Number of boys = 14 Children

- Number of days service is provided per year = 218 Days

**4. Student to Care-giver/teacher ratio (if applicable)**

Spl education class 8 children / one Teacher

Therapy Session 14 children / 2 care taker

**5. Cost of service per student per day** = 138.00 to 140.00 ( Based on 2017-2018 year expenses) = 218 working days based calculation

**6. % of budget supported by Asha for Education** = 65% (Based on 2017-2018 a/c statement)

**7. Teachers/Counselors salary**

Spl educator 1 = 10,000/- Spl educator 2 = 7000/- , assistance spl educator = 6000/-

Care taker (1) = 6000/- and Care taker (2 )5500/- cook = 4000/- Physiotherapist = 8000/- (1000 per day) Driver = 7000/-

**8. % of students supported by Asha for Education**

Asha support total children they didn't fix the number of children support

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