

# Rajatalab - Proposal

Asha Chennai has been working with government schools in Tamilnadu for more than 15 years. In the last 5 years, we have been seriously looking at enhancing education through technology. You can see some of these efforts documented in the [Asha Kanini project page](#). This project also received part of the funding through the Asha Innovative and Scalable Projects initiative.

We are doing the following things related to technology and education.

- Teaching computer science. We have developed a curriculum for teaching computer science to classes 1 to 8. This is significantly better than the CBSE curriculum. We are in the process of developing lesson plans / tutorials to cover every item in the curriculum.
  - Teaching Maths, Science, English and other subjects using computers. We have collated contents from variety of sources like TN government, SSA, Asha itself, various third party free contents etc. We have developed an Asha Kanini software to provide easy access to all these contents. We mapped all these contents to TN Samacheer Kalvi curriculum / lessons. The software can also handle other languages and other curriculum.
  - We conduct oral assessments based on ASER and also our own written assessments in English, and Maths. We have developed software to display these results in a meaningful way. We have been doing some correlation of the academic performance against social factors. We are in the process of doing some data analytics work with an IITB professor.
- In January Asha Rajatalab approached us to see if they can also start computer science education at some government schools in that area. Asha Chennai funded the effort in one school at Harsos This year they would like to expand this to 5 schools in that area.

Initial focus will be on teaching computer science. However the hope is that they will also start mapping some of the contents to UP state board curriculum. We will start distributing these contents (for Hindi) to the government teachers and other schools in that area as well. At present conducting assessment there etc. will be beyond our reach.

Asha Chennai will train the teachers from UP and work with them closely. We will also take a couple of trips to monitor the progress of the project.

I wanted to also provide an update about the current status of the project.

Last academic year one Omprakash was working on the project at the Harsos school. He couldn't continue because of his continuing education. Another teacher Ajay started working along with Omprakash. This year Ajay started working at Harsos when the schools opened in July. We then conducted interviews from Chennai (me and Ramakrishnan with Suresh in Rajatalab) and found the candidates to be quite weak. We then decided we will conduct the same test for the teachers as we conduct in Chennai. We finally found 2 candidates who meet our criteria -- Gunjan Patel and Rohit Kumar. They have also accepted the job.

Gunjan has also started to go with Ajay to the Harsos school. She will start going to her own school starting next week. The breakup planned is as follows.

- 1- \*Mehadiganj primary school\* -- 222 student in class 3,4 and 5.
2. \*Harsos primary and upper primary school\* -- 358 students in classes 3, 4 and 5. There are 223 student in classes 6 , 7 and 8. Currently Ajay kumar is teaching both these schools. We may offload a bigger school to one of the other teachers.
3. \*Hardattpur primary school\* -- 62 students in classed 3 , 4 and 5.
4. \*Jagatpur primary school\* -- 61 students in classed 3 ,4 and 5.  
Gunjan patel will teach in both these school. She will join on 2nd september.
5. \*Harpur primary school\* -- 97 students in class 3,4 and 5.
6. \*Ganeshpur primary school\* -- 65 students in class 3 , 4 and 5.  
Rohit vishwakarma will teach at both these schools. He will join on 2nd september.

At the moment we have short listed 3 teachers. Implementing a subset of the project with just 3 teachers would require a budget of about Rs 3.1 Lakhs. Here are the details. If you can fund this amount that would be still be great.

Teacher salary  $6000 \times 3 \times 10$ . = 180000

2 laptops with mouse,keyboard = 60000

Travelling for teacher  $1000 \times 3 \times 10$  = 30000

Internet exp = 6000

Teaching material & meeting cost = 6000

Training trip 4 persons(with sleeper class) = 20000

Other misc costs (Admin, Misc) = 8000

Total = Rs 3,10,000 /-

The support from the government schools at Rajatalab area has not been a problem so far. Note for providing teachers to teacher computer science, we will rarely get any push-back. The tougher things are things like conducting assessments in the school. We are not planning that in the first year or two in the UP schools. This will require lot of support for the school.

The bigger problem I see is that the schools there have NO computers. Teaching 20 or 30 children with just the teacher's laptop is not going to be effective. This I see as the biggest pitfall. We will also be trying to get used laptops for the schools in TN as well as these ones in UP.

The programme is going along well at Harsos. Suresh periodically sends me photos of the classes at Harsos. I will ask him to share it with you all. BTW if you can share the phone number of which you have Whatsapp, that would make it easier for him to share that.

If you are releasing something in the Rs 3 to 4 Lakhs, I will request you to not ear mark it to specific line items in the proposal. Beyond the 3 teachers there are a few different things we can spend the amount on. If we get a good candidate for the lead teacher / coordinator role, we can hire him/her. If not we can purchase a few more laptops or at lease used laptops to take to the schools.

# Pics from Harsos





# Pics from Harsos



The strong arguments I will make on behalf of this project are,

1. I repeated during the various talks I gave here in the US why it is very important for us to work with government schools. Asha doesn't have any project to work with government schools in places like UP, Bihar etc. Here is an opportunity for us to understand as an organization what that will take. In Asha Rajatalab we have a reliable partner to jump the hoops required to make this take root in UP govt schools.
2. The project is already doing well in TN and is quite mature. So rather than starting from scratch, we already have a good curriculum worked out for teaching computer science, contents for teaching other subjects using computers (a lot of which is also available in Hindi) etc. Even minor things like formats for how the teachers will write monthly reports to us etc. are there already. So it will not be an amateurish attempt but a solid start.
3. We will be actively monitoring it and you would absolutely not have the kind of issues that you have in the past had with some Asha India projects. Asha Chennai volunteers will travel to Rajatalab twice a year for monitoring and all the staff from Rajatalab will travel to Chennai twice a year for training. They have already come once in April 2019.
4. This will bring together different parts of our Asha organisation and help us work together as a single organisation. I think frankly this will benefit Asha India as well as AfE.