Virtual Visit of Aralu PPC

**Organization Name:** Aralu PPC

**Type of visit:** Virtual Zoom meeting

**Name of the person who does the site visit:** ASHA Chicago Chapter team

**Contact person of the organization:** Meril

**Visit goals:** Virtual site visit to get an update on initiative

**Attendees of virtual visit:**
- From ASHA Chicago: Ravikumar, Ranjita R, Niti Shah
- From Aralu: Meril (Organizer) and other people who help him along with students

**Meeting Summary:**

- Meril provided background on how Aralu initiative started to ASHA team:
  - It was initiated at Bidar district in Karnataka state in India. Children of parents who are mainly daily wage workers or construction workers needed education and a safe place to stay when parents weren't around during the day.
  - Children could not go to school or government run PPCs due to casteism. PPC which is the pre-primary center has young children who will graduate from Aralu PPC and then go to a school which is half a kilometer away from Aralu. Aralu PPC team follows up on students enrolling into the school with the headmaster to ensure they are getting continued education.
  - From 10 years, Meril has been educating children. He initially started out by cycling around 2 kilometers from his place to the villages to teach the children himself. Thereafter, he met Reshma Madam in Bangalore who had knowledge about NGOs. With her help, he submitted an application to start Aralu Pre-Primary Center.

- Every year around 25 children have come to the school.
- School provides a safe place for children when parents are out working during the day.
- They sing, dance, learn numbers, alphabets, Kannada words and have charts for fruits/vegetables etc.
- Aralu PPC makes the kids confident to go to 1st standard at school and preps the children with basic knowledge.
- In 2021, around 35 students have enrolled. Meril is expecting around 20 to 25 students to attend the school.
- Aralu has been recognized by Government of Karnataka and is giving awards for their work to help and educate children.
- A case study shall be done Narayan Swamy from Bangalore this year. He will be writing a book about children who have been educated from Aralu and their success stories.
• Some of the people we met during the virtual visit are:

  • Teacher - Anjamma from 10 years
    - She has been working since the initiation of Aralu along with Meril Sir for 10 years
    - As per her feedback - Children stay from morning 9 AM to 4 PM in the evening. She teaches them numbers, dancing, alphabets and they have rest time as well.

  • Rathanmma who has been the Helper
    - Provides water, snacks and takes care of the children full time.

  • Yohan who takes care of accounts, emails and technical support

  • Sunitha - Meril’s wife who helps take care of the initiative along with him

  • Few parents of the children

  • All the children who are at Aralu

• During the site visit, 25 children were present. They introduced themselves, sang songs and spoke about what they like to do in school. Kids who had passed out of PPC and who were now attending local school were also present and provided positive feedback on how the school helped them when they were children.

• Currently, there is no toilet facility for children. This is something that will need to be discussed again with Meril and team.

Google Drive link for the meeting record:

https://drive.google.com/drive/u/1/folders/0B2xpVX84vjGNWV9fRGZMT0xHS0k?resourcekey=0-04K4v7WbfbSQiTjkdrafA

YouTube link:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p2-7Mf4N8pA