**Gramya Sansthan Virtual Site Visit**

**Organization**: Gramya Sansthan

(<https://www.facebook.com/dikshafoundation>)

**Project**: Gramya Sansthan (https://chicago.ashanet.org/project/?pid=253)

**Type of project**: Formal Education Centers

**Supporting Chapters**: Chicago (<https://chicago.ashanet.org/>) , Zurich

**Type of visit**: Virtual via Zoom

**Meet Date**: March 20th 2021 Time: 7:00 AM CST, 5:30PM IST

**Attendees**: Bindu Singh (Gramya), Various teachers and students from Gramya

Rama Kumanduri (Chicago), Niti Shah (Chicago), Revathi Kadari (Chicago), Cristina Romero (Chicago), Antonina Studniarek (Zurich)

Goals:

**The Virtual Site Visit:**

The visit started with an introduction from Gramya staff and the ASHA volunteers. The Gramya Sansthan staff, teachers and students were in one room with a video device (likely a laptop). Rama Kumanduri expressed concern that most of the people were without masks. The staff replied the COVID cases had declined quite a bit and rules had been relaxed. Schools were fully open for in-person teaching.

The Gramya coordinator , Bindu Singh, explained that all the schools had opened. There are over 550 students attending in-person across the three centers. The community mobilizer works to get students registered and also helps the families with Aadhar cards, ration cards and other needs. Bindu Singh re-iterated the need for continued support of the Community mobilizer position, the Health Coordinator and the Women’s coordinator. The funding for these positions was reduced as part of the 2020 Asha Chicago funding, due to challenges with fund-raising in Chicago.

The remaining discussion focused on the teachers and their curriculum. The below listed teachers introduced themselves and spoke for a few minutes each on what they taught, the students reaction, the textbooks used etc.

Teachers:

Sajeewan: Computer

Shiv Kumar: Social Sciences

Munesh Kumar: Geography

Rama: working with younger children

Abhishek: 7-year boy

Niti: Women’s health coordinator, 20+year experience

Question: What Syllabus is followed?

Response: the UP government syllabus is being used along with textbooks from the government program. The showed various textbooks, including the math book for the 7th grade.

Question: How many students continue to college?

Response: several students go to a Polytechnic and many have joined the Army.

Question: Is there a library and supplemental reading materials?

Response: The schools have a library and students can borrow materials. They get a daily newspaper delivered in Hindi.

Questions: What are the toilet facilities in the schools?

Response: all the schools have running water and separate facilities for Girls and Boys.

Question: Is lunch provided for students?

Response: No lunch is provided, students bring their lunch. A lunchbox was provided to all the students as part of the BalMela festival.

**Photos and Video Clips**:

The discussion was choppy due to connection issues and it was difficult to understand some of the students due to the distance with the laptop used for the call. Gramya staff agreed to record some of the students comments and shared them with us.