



Asha for Education
Stanford University Chapter
P.O. Box 19449
Stanford, CA 94309-9449

Site Visit Guidelines and Questionnaire Asha Stanford

Dear Sir/Madam,

Thank you for taking the time to conduct this site visit. Your visit will provide us valuable, first-hand information about the project, enabling us to better understand its circumstances and its needs. The following questionnaire is designed as a basic guide to assist you in conducting your visit.

As you conduct your visit, we ask that you be *sensitive* and *courteous* to the people running the project. This is crucial to maintain the healthy relationship of “equals” which is at the very core of the Asha ideology.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or the project steward responsible for the project at Stanford. I look forward to hearing your thoughts and observations through this review, and thank you once again for your help. Together we **can** make a difference!

President,
Asha Stanford.



Preparing for your visit

1. You should be able to collect the following information about the project from the project steward (Asha volunteer responsible for the project at Stanford) prior to your visit:
 - Project proposal
 - Past correspondence with the project
 - Any specific information that the project steward is looking for, from the site visit.
2. You also need to have some understanding of Asha for Education and our mission. This will help you to tailor your site visit in a more fruitful manner for Asha. You can get detailed information about Asha for Education from our web site at <http://www.ashanet.org>. Our site visit volunteers often find it helpful to study this web site (and this document!) before-hand, and have a copy of the original or modified project proposal with them before starting their visit.
3. We encourage you to talk individually to a broad cross-section of people, including some students, teachers, as well as community members who are not directly associated with the NGO. Such informal interaction is often the best way to learn about the project.
4. We also strongly encourage you to fill out this document yourself, rather than showing it to the project coordinators in India and asking them to fill it out.
5. This document is only designed as a basic guide. Please include any additional information/insights that you consider relevant with your review.
6. We look forward to meeting with you in person and hearing about your experiences, if this is possible. The project steward at Stanford will discuss the possibility of scheduling a presentation at an Asha meeting with you after your visit.
7. Finally, we encourage you to take some photographs/videos during your site visit, as they will help us see and hear what is going on at the project. As the old saying goes, a picture is worth a thousand words!



Basic information

Site Visitor's Information

- Name: Sonal Gupta
- Address: Stanford, CA
- Phone Number(s):
- Fax:
- Email: sonal@cs.stanford.edu

Visit Information

- Date: Jan 2, 2011
- Name of Project: Muskaan Residential Camps
- Name of the NGO running the project (if different):
- Was your site visit planned and known to the project, or was it a surprise visit?
 1. Planned
- Primary Project Contact:

Name: Sonal Gupta

Address:

Phone Number(s):

Fax:

Email: sonal@cs.stanford.edu

1. About the surrounding community

- About how many families live in the area to which the project caters?
Families of 8 bastis (slums)
- What do they do for a living?
Rag picking, low income work, mostly tribal people
- What is their economic/religious/educational background?
Mostly tribal people settled in Bhopal, very poor
- **How do they view the efforts taken by the organization that runs the project?**
Pretty good.
- Has the community supported the project (financially, donating land, volunteering, etc.)?
Not really. The community is very poor.

2. About the project

- How far away is the project site from the main town/village? How do children commute (foot, bus, etc.)?
~30kms from Bhopal. Kids live on the camp site.
- **Please describe the infrastructure and facilities currently available to the project** (e.g., furniture, toilets, midday meals, library, sports, residential facilities).
Residential facility, no furniture, all meals served, yoga, sports etc
- Are the buildings permanent or temporary constructions? What is their physical condition?
Rented out building from the forest department
- How big are the classrooms? How many children per each room?
Decent size, 3 classrooms. From 8-20 students in each class.

3. About the teachers

- How many total full-time/part-time teachers/volunteers are involved in project
3 full time teachers
- What is the average age of these teachers/volunteers?
20s-30s
- How many women involved in the project and what are their responsibilities?
2 teachers to teach 2 classes
- How many volunteers/teachers are from the local community?
None
- What is their level of education and professional background?
Master of Social Work, MA or BA final
- **What is the motivation for them to work for the project?**
- How long they have been with organization/project?
One from 6 months, another since 3 years and the third one for 1 year
- Where do they live, and how much they travel to work here?
Most of them live in Bhopal. The camp is residential for the teachers too.
- If paid, are they satisfied with their salaries?
Seemed to be.
- How many teachers/volunteer have left the project in the previous year? How many new teachers/volunteers have joined in the previous year?
1 female teacher left.
- Does the organization train the teachers? If yes, how do they provide the training?



4. About the students

- What portion of children from the local community attend this school? What is the age group? Boy/girl ratio? 21 boys 18 girls
- What is the socio-economic background of students? (Are they first generation learners, what is the educational and monetary background of family etc.)

first generation, very poor

- What are their activities they perform outside of school hours?

Yoga, sports

- ***What is their motivation for attending the school?***

According to the organization, most of them didn't have much motivation before the camp. They seemed pretty motivated to continue education when I visited them.

- What is drop out rate among the students? What do they do after they leave the project?

In the camp report.

- Are the children charged fees for attending school?

Not for the residential camps.

- What curriculum does the school follow? (State Board/ Central/ Alternative). What are the children taught?

State govt, however, they have their own way of teaching using good visual aids and resources that are closer to the economic conditions of the students.

- What is the medium of instruction?

Mainly Hindi but some English.



5. About the NGO

- What is the main ideology of the organization behind the project?
- How old is the organization?
- How and why was it founded?
- What is their vision about the future of the project?
- Who are founders? Do the founders work full time with the project or do they hold other jobs as well? Are the founders paid? Where do the founders live?
- What were the initial challenges faced by the organization and by the founder in particular? How did he/she overcome them? Who helped them through the initial stages?
- Has the organization ever approached the government for funding? If so, what was the outcome? If not, why not?
- **What are the typical problems that they face?**
Persecution from the people around the building they run their center from since people don't want to have poor kids coming to the building compounds etc
- Is the organization/founder involved with any other social issues/causes other than running the school?

6. Financial Information and statistics

1. What are the different sources of funding for this project? (different agencies/government)

Tata

2. What is the annual budget?

\$8880 is 40% of the total cost of the residential camp

3. **Are detailed records of past funding and spending available? If possible, please request a copy (of annual financial statements, for example).**
4. What is the largest portion of expenses (salaries/infrastructure/etc.)?
Salaries and food.
5. What is the total enrollment? What is the teacher/student ratio? Drop-out rates?

More information about the students in the camp:

I encourage you to read the camp report sent by Muskaan attached with this site visit report.

When I reached them at around 10 am on a Sunday, the students were in an art class, making masks out of balloons. Their classrooms had visual aids for teaching all around. They also showcased their art work. I checked out notes of some of the students. Many students were able to read Hindi, and some English too. The rent of the building seemed a bit expensive to me – Rs 8k per month when the rooms didn't have any furniture and it was in a village. Maybe Muskaan couldn't find a better place. In my personal communications with Shivani, she told that they actually changed locations to this building since the previous one was not big enough. The kids were wearing pretty old, torn and dirty clothes. Maybe they hadn't taken bath when I arrived but I communicated to Shivani that it will be better if they can wear decent clothes (she replied that each student has just 1 change of clothes and money is always an issue for buying new clothes). However, even after considering all the negative points, I think the positive points outweigh the negative ones. The students seemed pretty enthusiastic to go to a regular school (Muskaan center in Bhopal) after the camp. It seemed to me that living in a nice, encouraging and clean environment for 24x7 for 4 months might change them when they get back home. I think Muskaan does a good job tracking all the students and their families. More points are below:

They like the food they get

Seemed very enthusiastic

Some students could read and understand English poems

Almost students were able to read Hindi (except for ones that are learning letters and small words)

Art classes in addition to educational ones

Many story and poem books were written by Muskaan students

Students admitted to rag picking and child labor at home

All seemed enthusiastic to attend regular schools after going home

(including the ones that attended the last camp but didn't join a regular school)

50 kms from Bhopal (~1.5 hours)

Started on Oct 12th, 2010, 1 week pre-activity

Initial attendance: 42; Current attendance: 29 (~50% girl to boy ratio)

Forest department building – on rent

2 rooms for sleeping – 1 boys, 1 girls

3 class rooms (divide students into 3 types of education level)

No furniture

Students age group varies a lot

All students were from very poor background – dirty and torn out clothes





