Dear Volunteer

Thanks for conducting this site visit.

The following set of questions is only a suggested guideline. Some of the following questions may not be relevant or applicable to the particular project you are visiting, but please do try to answer as many of them as possible. Please note that Part sB & C necessitate that the information be gathered through conversations with the children and their parents, and not simply the group's teachers and staff.

Please feel free to attach any documents/photos you feel are pertinent to the project.

Thanks.
- Asha for Education

Date: Nov. 30, 18

Name of the Project: BTS-PathBhavan

Name of the Organisation Running the Project (if different): BTS (Baikunthapur Tarun Sangha)

Was your site visit announced?   Yes, it was planned ☒   No, it was a surprise visit ☐

	Project Contact	**You Name** **(Asha volunteer conducting the visit)**
Name	Susanta Giri	1. Gourab Kar
Address	Vill & P.O.- Baikunthapur, Dist. South 24 Parganas West Bengal PIN-743383	1. 316 Highland Rd, Apt C102 Ithaca, NY 14850
Phone(s)	+91-9733524070	001-832-732-3411
Fax	Nil	N.A.
E-mail	btsruraloffice@gmail.com, susantagiriindia@gmail.com	gk272@cornell.edu

PART A: Particulars about the organization and its environment

1. What are the different focus areas of the organization? (give a rough estimate of the % of their total effort/funding)
Community development 20%   Education 40% Health 15%
Other 25% (please specify) Sustainable Agriculture 15%, Disaster Risk Reduction & Livelihoods 10%

2. What is the administrative structure of the group (e.g. Board of Directors/Grassroots-based)?
Board of Directors - 9
Project Director/Co-Ordinator - 1
Desk In Charges - 6
Project Staff - 28

3. Are there any other organizations working in the area providing any one or all of the services provided by the visited organization? (Briefly mention their names and their objectives)

Organization	Objectives of the organization
Ramkrishna Mission Ashram	Religious faith based organisation promoting community development

PART B: The organization and the community it serves
(Information to be gathered from parents and children)

1. Approximately how many families live in the area? 3400 families in 4 villages in the area

2. What do the parents do for a living? (Agricultural worker, Daily wage laborer etc.)
Agricultural activities, Fishing, Collecting non-timber forest produce, Rickshaw-pulling for carring goods, Fish & Vegetable vending, Daily wage labor, Agricultural labor.

3. At the time of enrolment, does the school ask for the names of both parents?
Yes ☐   No, just the father's name ☒   No, just the mother's name ☐

4. How often do the teachers meet the parents?
Once a week

5. How do the parents participate in the organization's activities? (e.g. by contributing their time, money or labor in the school's activities etc.)

Parents' contribute a minimum of tuition fees and attending parent-teachers' meetings. The tuition fee is fixed at Rs. 60/- per month.

6. Are there any Government Schools in the area?   Yes ☒   No ☐

7. If yes, how far are the Government Schools from the community?

The nearest Govt. School is a 30-45 minute walk from Baikanthapur Village. Since there are no school buses or pool cars, the distance makes it very difficult for young children to walk to the Govt. School. The vagaries of the weather in the summer months and rainy season further complicate access to the Govt. School.

8. Why did the parents choose this school over the Government School?

The Govt. School in the area is over-crowded, with teacher-student ratios that inhibit teaching and learning. In addition, the teachers are not from the community and stay far away from school - sometimes even 50 km away. Typical to the pattern of government schools, teachers are frequently absent and do not stay back to help the school children beyond the official school hours. In contrast, at BTS-PathBhavan School the free and joyful learning atmosphere, and use of novel Teaching and Learning Materials (TLMs) translate to better academic results. Children from BTS-PathaBhavan excel academically in the Govt. School during their post primary education. The teachers are all from the community, and Beyond school hours, there is special care and additional free coaching provided to students to support their learning needs.

9. When you visited, how many children were present in the class?

The school has 6 Classes - Lower KG, Upper KG, Class 1, Class 2, Class 3 and Class 4. There were a total of 201 students during our visit on 5th November, 2018. Enquiries revealed an attendance of 97%.

What is the regular class strength? The regular class strength varies between 22 - 34.

Comments: The admission session for the next batch was on during our visit. Since the school has been recognized by the State Government in December'15, it is estimated that the overall student population will increase to 250 in the next couple of years. There is a state government directive to upgrade the school to Class 5. However, since this is not a state government aided school, the costs of upgrading the infrastructure and the human resources will have to be bourne by BTS through endowments and grants from external sponsors.

10. Do the children seem to enjoy coming to school?

Since this is the only school in the village, and there is a Mid-day Meal Scheme for the students the attendance levels are impressive. Preliminary enquiries with students, though in presence of school staff, revealed that children enjoyed coming to school.

PART C: Project particulars

(Information to be gathered from students and staff)

1. What is the mode of teaching in the school? (Check the appropriate choices)
A. Formal (State Board, Central Board etc.) ☐   *till what class?* Class 4
B. Non-Formal Education (NFE) ☒   do the students also attend formal school?
C. Vocational ☒
D. Other ☐. Please specify _____

2. If A (Formal), up to what grade(LKG, 5th, 7th etc.) does the school conduct classes?
The school will be upgraded to provide proimary education upto Class 5. BTS is considering initiating procedures to be formally affiliated to the West Bengal Board of Primary Education (http://www.wbbpe.org/).

3. If B (Non-Formal Education) how many of the children also attend formal schools in the area?
Since the school offers education upto Class 4, all students have to pursue further studies in formal / Government schools beyong Class 4.
If none do, does the project plan this for the future?
4. If Non-Formal Education, does the organization create its own study material (books, games)?
BTS-PathBhavan School sources books and other Teaching & Learning Materials (TLMs) with a special emphasis on English, Mathematics & Science subjects.

5. If C (Vocational), what do the children do after they finish training?
Vocational Courses for the students include craft based activities - Making Chalk, Greeting Cards, Clay Models etc. In addition students are introduced to computers at the Computer Center in school.

6. How many staff or volunteers are recruited from the community? Eight (8) Staff members are from the local community in Baikanthapur Village.
How many of the staff are women? Three (3) of the Staff members are women
7. How many teachers have left the school in the past one year, and why?
There have been NO teachers who have left the school in the past year.

8. How many new teachers have joined in the past year? In the past year, two (2) teachers have joined.

9. Does the organization train the teachers?   Yes ☒   No ☐
    If yes, how do they provide the training? Organising Training by Resource Training Institute

10. How much is the staff paid? Average Rs. 2500 - 3000 per month; this is below the salaries for Government teachers. There is need to consider an endowment to provide incentives and/or higher salaries to the teachers (at par with salaries for government teachers)
    Is it on par with the salary paid to the staff in the Government schools?   Yes ☐   No ☒

PART D: Financial resources of the organization

(Feedback from the person conducting the site visit)

1. Do you think the proposed amounts in the budget are reasonable?   Yes ☐   No ☒   Maybe ☐

2. Are all items covered in the budget? Yes ☐   No ☒   Maybe ☐
Comments: I have included new items in the budget and listed them in the following section.

3. Is there anything you think should be added or removed from the budget?

Yes ☒   No ☐

If you recommend any changes to the budget, please explain your reasons for this.

I have listed below items that are of immediate need and the financial cost associated with each.

1.   Student Transportation: There is need for at least two school vehicles (motorized vans with overhead cover) to provide all weather transportation facility for school students. Discussions with teachers revealed that many parents from nearby villages have shown interest in sending their children to BTS-Pathabhavan, if there is a viable transportation facility. The current students strength is around 200+ students. If the school can develop a transportation service, the enrollment numbers may increase to 350+ students. The student transportation facility will cost Rs 1,50,000 x 2 = Rs. 3,00,000/-

2.   Drinking water station: BTS-Pathabhavan provides mid-day meals for all students; before and after meals students venture outside the school campus to wash their hands in the nearby pond. If there is a drinking water station and hand-wash facility within the school then students will not have to venture outside, reducing risks and time wasted. The drinking water station and hand wash with overhead shed will cost Rupees: 1,85,000/-

3.   Electrification: BTS-Pathabhavan has applied for a power connection from the state electricity board. In 6-months an electrical connection is expected. Consequently, the entire building needs to be wired; fans and lights have to be purchased and installed. The cost of electrification along with fans and lights is estimated to cost Rs 1,35,500/-

4.   Computer Room Upgradation: Among the schools in the area, only BTS-Pathabhavan has a dedicated computer room and students are computer literate. The computer room needs to be upgraded with items listed below. The cost of upgrading the computer room is estimated to be Rs. 2,35,000/- with itemized costs listed below.
     --Computer @Rs. 20,000 x 6 = Rs.120,000/-
     --Computer Tables, 6 Nos.   = Rs. 25,000/-
     --Ceiling Mounted Projector = Rs. 65,000/-
     --Public Address System   = Rs. 25,000/-

5.   Installation of safety grills and storm weather protection in the corridors: There is an urgent need to provide mild steel grills or barriers on the first floor corridor. In addition, there needs to be a provision to deflect rain water from splashing onto the corridor, and making the walkway safe for all users. The cost of fabrication and installation is estimated to be Rs. 2,60,000/-

6.   Recruiting additional teaching staff: BTS-Pathabhavan has seven teachers at present, and there is a need for at least three more teachers. As the school does not receive any funds from the state government and is dependent on external grants, a one-time endowment, that provides for the teacher's salaries would be of great benefit and will help BTS-Pathabhavan become self-sufficient in meeting its annual expenses. The amount requested for this one-time endowment is Rs. 75,00,000 over the in next 3~5 years. The endowment amount for BTS will generate (Fixed Deposit Interest in a Nationalied Bank) about Rs. 5,00,000 to cover the annual running costs for teachers honorarium.

4. Did you discuss the proposed changes with the project? If so, please describe their response.

The proposed changes to the budget were made in consultation with the teaching staff at BTS-Pathabhavan, based on their projected requirements envisioned in the short-term. Item #1~5 may be feasible to be funded by the ASHA-Cornell chapter. Item #6 calls for a significantly higher magnitude of contribution, which may be funded in collaboration with other chapters of ASHA.

PART E: Comments
(Feel free to attach documents if necessary)
1. The previous visit to AHA-Cornell was made in January 2016. It has been almost two years between visits. If possible, there should be at least one annual visit by an ASHA-Cornell visitor to BTS-Pathabhavan. This will ensure improved communication, better coordination and reduce financial insecurity associated with delayed distribution of allocated funds.

2. There is need to condsider a long-term view with respect to the finincial independence and self-sufficieny of BTS-Pathabhavan. The current funding model provides for annual running expenses, and funds of about Rs. 4,50,000 ~ 5,00,000/- are disbursed for this purpose. A similar amount has been disbursed annually over the past years. While this contribution ensures that annual expenses are met, the model is not finincially sustainable. Funds are provided annually, and after meeting the expenses, thete is no money left for long-term benefits. Instead of the current annual disbursement model, we could propose the creation of a substantial one-time endowment of Rs. 75,00,000/- for BTS-Pathabhavan. The amount can be invested in a nationalized bank in India; the yearly interest from the fixed deposit in the bank will provide for the annual expenses of Rs. 5,00,000/- . This entails a higher level of commitment from ASHA, but had long-term benefits for both BTS-Pathabhavan as awell as for ASHA-Cornell.

3. I have attached three proposals from BTS-Pathabhavan, as additional resources in the email.