



# Asha for Education™

## Site Visit Questionnaire

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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: Jan. 9, 16**

**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)
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**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 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

**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 carrying goods, Fish & Vegetable vending, Daily wage labour, Agricultural labour.

**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 (December 2015 data)

**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 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-PathBhavan excel academically in the Govt. School during their post primary education. 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 176 students during our visit on 9th January, 2016. 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.

**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.) ☐

B. Non-Formal Education (NFE) ☒

C. Vocational ☒

D. Other ☐. Please specify \_\_\_\_\_

**till what class?** Class 4

do the students also attend formal school?

**2. If A (Formal), up to what grade(LKG, 5<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> etc.) does the school conduct classes?**

N.A.

**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.

*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. 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, One (1) teacher has 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

**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: Due to changes in structure of ASHA's Funding commitments, and inability to conduct a site visit over the past one-and-half years, BTS-PathBhavan has not received funds from ASHA for more than two years. It is requested that the due amount be released as early as possible.

**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.**

N.A.

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

N.A.

**PART E: Comments***(Feel free to attach documents if necessary)*

The BTS-PathBhavan School started in 2001 with ASHA being one of the initial donors towards the cause of establishing a school in the village of Baikanthapur. Over the past fifteen years, ASHA has been nurturing the growth of the school by supporting its various projects. The school has been "officially recognized" upto Class 4 level by the State Education Board in 2015. In the years to come, BTS-PathaBhavan surely will be able to offer primary education that is recognized by the state or central board(s). It is hoped that the efforts of the dedicated team of people at BTS, led by Mr. Susanta Giri will help them achieve their goal of establishing an institution of learning that offers the full spectrum of school education from primary to higher secondary levels.

Over the past 15 years, about 3500 students have been schooled in BTS-PathBhavan; a few students from the early years have completed their college education to return back as teachers in their former school. In our discussions with the teachers and the management, we could gauge their level of dedication and the sense of pride they have in building this institution. It is a remarkable achievement for these people, given the remote location and the lack of formal support from the government. In terms of incremental development of school infrastructure, the management are considering adding a Nature Lab and a Science Lab to the facilities provided to students, as well as create a Children's Garden that works as a learning laboratory.

While support from ASHA has been invaluable and has had a fundamental role in shaping the growth of BTS-PathBhavan, there is a perceived need for the institution to become financially self-sufficient. The BTS-PathBhavan management propose to convert the single story west-wing of the school building into a double-storied structure with additional classrooms and lab spaces. The additional space will facilitate the use of the school infrastructure as a Private Teachers' Training Institute (PTTI) in the evening hours. It is believed that the PTTI facility will become a revenue source that can offset the contribution from ASHA and enable financial sustainability for the institution. We had preliminary discussions with Mr. Susanta Giri in this regard and a detailed proposal may be placed before ASHA in the near future. We would like to express our gratitude for the hospitality provided by Mr. Giri and his team, and acknowledge the contributions made by the BTS team in helping us develop this report. We look forward to ASHA-Cornell partnering with BTS-PathBhavan in its pursuit of educating and empowering the community.

Gourab Kar and Sanket Roy, Ithaca NY, Feb 2016.





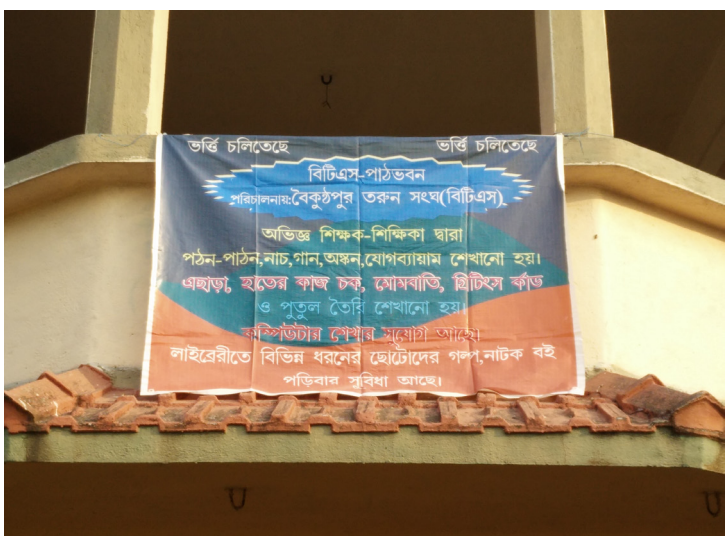
**Figure 1:** A View of the BTS-PathBhavan from the entrance.



**Figure 2:** Students greeting us in a class on the first-floor.



**Figure 3:** Students greeting us in class on the ground-floor.



**Figure 4:** A poster in school informing people about the on-going admissions in BTS-PathBhavan. A literal translation from Bengali- “Admissions going-on in BTS-Path Bhavan. Experienced teachers focusing on academics as well as extra-curricular activities such as dancing, singing, painting, yoga. Students also learn workshop skills, candle making and creating greeting cards. The are opportunities to learn to use computers and there is a well-stocked library for students to access.”



**Figure 5:** The BTS-PathBhavan Team with ASHA-Cornell. From Left to Right - Uttam Giri, Sanket Roy, Debkumar Das, Susanta Giri, Debasis Giri, Haripada Jansa and Rabisankar Das.