

Field Visit Report to Remedial Coaching Centres run by Mandra Lions Club

Field visit date: 5th of March, 2026

▪ Introduction:

Primary education in the Bagmundi block of Purulia, West Bengal, is managed under two main circles (I and II), overseeing approximately 149 primary schools. The area is part of a district with relatively low overall literacy (65.38% in 2011) and significant gender disparities. The circles ensure basic infrastructure and educational services in rural areas.

The area is divided into Baghmundi - I (76 primary schools) and Baghmundi-II (73 primary schools), with offices located near the Block Development Office and Shasha Serengdih, respectively. The broader Purulia district historically faces challenges with low female literacy (51.29%) compared to male literacy (78.85%), which affects the educational environment. The schools are part of the West Bengal school system, which is focusing on strengthening foundational education. A comprehensive, recent, localized, and granular student performance data (like ASER reports) specifically for Bagmundi is not readily available, the structure reflects a standard rural West Bengal administrative setup focused on expanding access to education.

▪ Purpose/ Objective of the visit:

In the given backdrop, Mandra Lions Club (MLC), a state level NGO has been working in the area for nearly three decades and engaged in promoting school education, child protection, health and livelihoods of the people of Bagmundi and adjacent blocks of Purulia in collaboration and partnerships with the Government departments, local governance structures and communities. To ensure successful transition from primary to secondary with a good scholastic performance, and no drop out, MLC runs a Remedial Coaching Centres across different Gram Panchayats of Bagmundi block.

The purpose of the visit was to interact with the children & their parents to understand the real needs of having such centres and how they are helping the school going children. The visit also included interaction with the centre level Staff of MLC and the Govt. school teachers wherever available to learn & understand from their experiences on the facilitating role such centres are playing in promoting school education.

▪ Key Observations from the field visit:

On the 5th of March 2026, I visited four such centres that are being run and managed by MLC in Bagmundi block. Such centres are operated based on the convenience of the children, ideally in the same Govt. school premises where the children are enrolled and pursuing their education. The sessions conducted in the Govt. schools in Bengali (being the primary medium of instruction), however, majority of the children belong to the Santhali community and understand Alchiki better than Bengali, and cannot really internalize the meanings of the sessions. The Centre Facilitators who manage these centres help the children by interpreting them in Alchiki and explain the sessions further to make sure the children understand them well. This is a critical

approach, and very much needed since most of the children are the first-generation learners and do not have any support system at home. There used to be many incidents of school dropouts earlier from these groups of children who couldn't understand the sessions and lack support from the family.

Status of Remedial Education Centres

Sl. No.	Name of Centre	Village	Class	Boys	Girls	Total
1	Dhaska After School Centre	Dhaska , Matha G. P.	1	4	7	11
			2	12	3	15
			3	7	5	12
			4	8	6	14
		Sub total		31	21	52
2	Usuldungri After School Centre		1	6	5	11
			2	0	2	2
			3	5	3	8
			4	2	3	5
		Sub Total		13	13	26
3	Burda After School Centre		1	5	2	7
			2	6	1	7
			3	6	7	13
			4	6	5	11
		Sub Total		23	15	38
4	Jargo After School Centre		1	2	2	4
			2	1	3	4
			3	2	5	7
			4	1	5	6
		Sub Total		6	15	21
		Grand Total				137

Specific centre level observations:

- i. The children were found very lively in the centres, participating and enjoying the sessions that were being organised by MLC's Facilitators.
- ii. Children from Std. I to Std. IV from Govt. Primary Schools attend the centres, are assisted to complete their home-work through gaining further clarity about the lessons learnt in the schools.

- iii. The Centre Facilitators teaches subjects, that are Language, Mathematics, Social Science; explain the contents in Alchiki and ask them to practice.
- iv. The need of such sessions became very evident in retaining the interest of the students (mostly first-generation learners) in the schools.
- v. The sessions provide better clarity to the students on the subjects/ contents and yield through better scholastic performance of the children.
- vi. Such sessions facilitate successful transitioning of the children to upper classes and more importantly from primacy to secondary education.
- vii. Such centres play the role of a bridge between the Govt. Schools and the Communities (parents & children) and lay the foundation of learnings for the children from the under-privileged communities.
- viii. The Govt. school teachers also appreciate and welcome this initiative and accepts its complementarity with the roles performed by them.
- ix. There are a few Govt. schools where teachers come from far off places and become irregular at times however the MLC's Centre Facilitators cover up and address the gaps.
- x. Parents, Local Governance Representatives and ICDS workers were also found quite positive about the role that are being played by these centres.
- xi. Since most of the students are Santali speaking, these centres help students to understand the subjects in their own language.
- xii. Use of teaching aids like flash cards, charts, posters, drawing equipment, Number boards, different types of blocks, small-big, long-short and other concepts are introduced which take away the monotony; encourage students to participate in the teaching-learning process.

▪ **Suggestions/ Recommendations:**

- i. These, before or after school remedial coaching and education centres/ Special Classes that are organised by Mandra Lions Club is helping the school going children (Std. I to IV) age appropriate learnings in their mother tongue.
- ii. One most critical role these centres are playing is prevention of drop out and successful transition from primary to secondary standards.
- iii. Overall, the need for the program in those communities and the benefits of the children through this program is quite evident.
- iv. The centres are operated in extremely backward communities where participatory teaching- learning is a bigger dream. However, MLC with local support and community engagement make this possible.
- v. Such programs playing a significant role in challenging the existing practices and to improve the education in the remotest area; this effort must be appreciated.
- vi. Such centres also playing an important role in addressing the Gender Norms, patriarchy by encouraging girls to participate, perform and encouraging the parents to appreciate the efforts of the girls.
- vii. Kids have developed good understanding on the subjects and were found to articulate/ present keeping away the shyness.

- viii. Most of the Classes had good attendance (12—15) kids per class, all enthusiastically taking part in the teaching-learning process.
- ix. The Centre Facilitators also do home visits and meeting with parents in case of any specific need or counseling and found to be very useful.
- x. I found the need of running these centres and MLC should reach out to external donors as well as Govt. support to run such centres to improve the overall school enrolment and drop out in the block.
- xi. The initiative can be documented as a “Case Study” which is helping the children from most marginalised families/ communities to attend, learn, transition from primary to secondary education with support of such centres and facilitators.
- xii. I would also suggest of establishing such centres for students of Std. V to VIII who may also be facing similar difficulties and backwardness.
- xiii. I am aware that, it might be logistically little difficult, however, involving teachers with specific subject knowledge can bring more improvement and rigour in the teaching learning process and overall environment.
- xiv. Some advanced level of trainings for the Centre Facilitators would certainly be helpful for them to be able to conduct and facilitate the sessions more effectively and efficiently.
- xv. Parent – teacher interface with regard to scholastic performance of the students would also be helpful to bring required changes in the teaching learning and also to develop individual learning plan for children in special needs.



**Glimpses from the Remedial Coaching/
Education Centres run by MLC**