

I am Rajaraman Krishnan, a volunteer of Asha Chennai. I made a site visit to some potential new schools in Guduvancheri on 18th Sept 2018 along with Mrs. Kasturi Eswaran the project steward of the Poorna Vidhya project. Here is a brief background. We have been supporting 5 school in the Mylapore, RA Puram, Besant Nagar areas as part of Poorna Vidhya. As one of our teachers shifted from Besant Nagar to Guduvancheri, we also added support to one more school there. We have been meaning to expand the project to support additional schools in either poorer areas of Chennai like Semmancheri, Kannagi Nagar, Kodungaiyur etc. or outskirts like Guduvancheri.

Our administrative staffs Malliga and Moorthy have also shifted to Guduvancheri and we felt we have good opportunity to expand into that area. Mrs. Malliga had visited a few schools and had been requesting us to also visit the same. Further a visit to the ADWMS Nandhivaram school that are already supporting at Guduvanchery was also long due. Unfortunately we could finally travel only on the school exam week. We couldn't interact with the children during these visits.

ADWMS Nandhivaram

Mrs. Kasturi had recently arranged for a donation of 4 laptops to this school from the Innerwheel club and Ford. We checked the facilities in the school and provisions for them to use these laptops. They didn't have a separate computer room. They were using a part of class 5 classroom as the computer room. Currently as Philomena, Asha teacher, was teaching class 5 as well as teaching computers to all classes, this was not a big problem. However with the additional computers etc., this will become a problem. They wanted some partitions to separate out the computer area from the rest of the classroom. Here are photos of the 5th std classroom with children taking the exams and the building in which this is the middle classroom.



We had also brought with us the full set of Maths kits from Jodogyan and Kits & Concepts that we usually give to all our supported schools. Here is a photo of Mrs. Kasturi giving these with the classes 1 and 2 children. In the photo at their PTA teacher teaching classes 1 and 2, Malliga, HM and Asha teacher Philomena.



PUPS Nandhivaram

Our Asha teacher at ADWMS Nandhivaram, Philomena, took us to PUPS Nandhivaram. The school was very visibly neat even though it was small. The HM was there negotiating the purchase of uniforms for the children that was being sponsored by a local donor. Here is the student strength details of the school:

Class	Strength
1	24
2	22
3	17
4	12
5	19

As you can see clearly the teacher has managed to enroll students in the younger classes. She has managed to increase the enrolment from about 60 to more than 90 now. She is confident of increasing it to 150+ in a couple of years. Part of her confidence stems from the fact that the situation (like in the city) is one of lots of children currently in private schools. That number will be more that the number in this school.

The school just has 3 teachers (HM + 2) and can benefit from our support. Even though we had gone there unannounced, she was quite keen to get Asha support. She ideally wants 2 teachers from Asha, esp. an English teacher. She was able to local support for

various things. The Ford company had also donated 6 computers to the school of which 4 are working.



PUMS Guduvancheri

This school was right on the GST road and in a very busy area. There was a stage and a big ground right outside the school. Unfortunately the school doesn't get to use it and it is only a disturbance for the school with political meetings etc. held there and people generally loitering about there when such meetings are not happening.

Here is the school strength details.

Class	Strengt h
1	19
2	24
3	31
4	36
5	43
6	61
7	46
8	38

Although the strength appears to be declining from the above numbers, actually the strength has increased in the last couple of years. This HM too was confident of increasing the strength of the school. She hope to increase it to 500+ before she retires in 5 years. Once again there are 1000+ children in the area going to private schools. The school has HM + 9 teachers. Five of the teachers are in the primary sections and 5 in the middle school sections.

The school has a very nice looking computer room equipped by Ford. They have 6 computers and 3 TVs. The HM was very clear in what she wanted. She wants a computer teacher and wants help in maintaining the computers. The room was currently storing a lot of junk and in a somewhat bad shape. She assured us that she will get it in good shape before our teacher comes there.



PUPS Madambakkam

Madambakkam is in the outskirts of Guduvanchery. It is beginning to look like rural area here. The school is operating in the same premise as the high school. So the place in very crowded. New building is being built for the high school. Only after the high school shifts will the infrastructure be reasonable for the school.

When we went the HM was not there and we talked to the assistant teacher. The school has 224 children and HM + 5 teachers. They do desparately need teachers but they do not have enough space even for the existing 6 teachers. The teachers have appointed one PTA teacher with their own funds.

The school has 3 computers but all the three are condemned. They have 50+ children in class 5 with some of them in English and some in Tamil medium. It is really difficult to imagine how the class would be. I think Asha can start it support only after some of these infrastructure issues are sorted out.



PUPS Thiruthuveli

This village is some 5 Kms from Madambakkam. This was clearly a rural area. This was a complete contrast to the school at Madambakkam. The school has only 17 children and a ground that was bigger than the primary and the high schools at Madambakkam put together! The school had a male HM and a female teacher. The children seemed to be well organised. But we didn't get a chance to interact with them. The school needs a computer teacher.



PUMS Orathoor

This was another compact well run school. The school had 77 children and HM + 5 teachers. Primary classes have 53 children and 2 teachers. Upper primary classes have 26 children and 4 teachers. They have also appointed one more PTA teacher which seemed quite unnecessary. There are an equal number of children going to private schools in that area. They need teachers for spoken English and Computers. They have two working laptops.

The school has two campuses separated by the road. The buildings were all new and the gardens well maintained. The HM however was not very sure about Asha support and wanted us to get all the necessary permissions before we send a teacher!



Other Schools

We were planning to visit schools PUPS Neelamangalam and PUPS Pallancheri. We couldn't visit the place as the road to that area was being relaid and we couldn't travel there. These are small schools with 18 and 20 children respectively. They would also like computer teachers to come to their school to teach the children. We picked schools that our staff Malliga could easily reach. Like in other places, poverty is there everywhere and there are probably many more equally deserving schools.