

I am Rajaraman Krishnan, a volunteer of Asha Chennai. I had made a visit to three schools that are planned to be supported as part of the Poorna Vidhya project for 2015 along with the project steward Mrs. Kasturi Eswaran. The visit was done in early July 2015.

Kasturi and I visited the corporation schools at Odaikuppam, Thiruvanmiyur, Sastrinagar and that are being supported by Poorna Vidhya on the teachers' day.

Here are the observations from the schools.

### **Shastrinagar School**

Class	Students on the Rolls	Actual
LKG	25	22
UKG		
1 <sup>st</sup> Std	15	10
2 <sup>nd</sup> Std	16	16
3 <sup>rd</sup> Std	10	10
4 <sup>th</sup> Std	13	13
5 <sup>th</sup> Std	13	13

There are a total of 22 students in the LKG and 62 in the 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> Stds. The numbers have increased by 10 from last year! LKG was just started this year. They will be starting the UKG next year. This is funded and operated separately. There are two teachers just for the Kindergarten. This seems to be well run. The teachers have Montessori training. The kindergarten will also help in increasing the numbers at this school over time.

The school has HM+2 teachers. This is one of the schools that is well run. The school has one of the most motivated government teachers I have found anywhere! The teacher here Prema, put her daughter through the same school and continued her in government school for her whole schooling. Of all the 100+ schools I have been to, this is the only government teacher I have seen sending their own child to a government school.

Shastrinagar Residents association is providing a para teacher, Mekala. Mekala used to be an Asha teacher at Odaikuppam. She is now going for half days to this school to teach computers and craft. She is a good teacher. I went there another day to the school just to understand what all she does with the computers. Both Mekala and the government teacher Prema attend all the Asha training even though they have no need to.

Currently Asha is also providing one teacher Philomina to the school. The school has w working and 4 non-working computers. The working ones are being effectively used by Mekala.

### **Thiruvanmiyur Kuppam School**

Class	English Medium	Tamil Medium
1 <sup>st</sup> Std	8	8
2 <sup>nd</sup> Std	8	13
3 <sup>rd</sup> Std	6	25
4 <sup>th</sup> Std	8	16
5 <sup>th</sup> Std	—	32

The school has a total of 124 children. The school has HM + 6 teachers. The previous HM was supposedly very interested in Asha support. However the present HM did not seem that interested. She put the responsibility of getting the permission to work with the school from the higher authorities on Asha. Another organization TNQ wants to adopt the school as part of their CSR programme. That would probably imply a much higher amount of support. So they didn't seem very keen to get Asha support.

The school had some old IBM computers donated 8 or 10 years back. None of them were working.

### **Odaikuppam School**

Class	English Medium	Tamil Medium
1 <sup>st</sup> Std	1	19
2 <sup>nd</sup> Std	2	15
3 <sup>rd</sup> Std	—	27
4 <sup>th</sup> Std	—	29
5 <sup>th</sup> Std	—	20

The total number of children (actual) is 113. This is about the same as last year. They had done a major door to door campaigning exercise at the school and had got some 250 enrollments total! However these parents were just keep the place if the private school admission did not come through and did not bring in their kids. The HM seemed very disappointed.

The school has HM+5 teachers. They primarily want a computer teacher. Till 2 years back Asha had provided Mekala as the computer teacher for this school. Asha has just hired a new teacher Yamuna to teach computers at this school. Out of the 6 computers at the school 2 are working and 4 not working. Their welcome for Asha was good.

### **Damodarapuram School**

Class	English Medium	Tamil Medium
1 <sup>st</sup> Std	0	2
2 <sup>nd</sup> Std	4	4
3 <sup>rd</sup> Std		8
4 <sup>th</sup> Std		12
5 <sup>th</sup> Std		8
6 <sup>TH</sup> Std		5
7 <sup>th</sup> Std		10
8 <sup>th</sup> Std		11

The total number of children (actual) is 64. Note this is a middle school with HM + 3 teachers, 2 teachers for the primary classes and 2 for the middle school. The HM was interested in getting a computer teacher from Asha but did not seem very motivated. The school has 1 working and 2 non-working computers.

Another NGO was running a science lab called Quid centre. We unfortunately couldn't see it on that day.

## **Conclusion**

Our support at Shastrinagar is very much appreciated and we should be supporting such motivated teachers. I think over the years the school will begin to do better in term of enrollment as well. We can consider supporting the Odaikuppam school as well. I did feel very strongly about the other two schools. The project steward Mrs. Kasturi also shared the same opinions.